

Spiderinnit

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Characters:	TommyInnit (Video Blogging RPF) , Toby Smith Tubbo , Wilbur Soot , Phil Watson (Video Blogging RPF) , Technoblade (Video Blogging RPF) , Jack Manifold , Freddie Badlinu , Eryn Cyberonix , Clay Dream (Video Blogging RPF) , GeorgeNotFound (Video Blogging RPF) , Sapnap (Video Blogging RPF) , Floris Fundy , Niki Nihachu , Eret (Video Blogging RPF) , quackity and karl are mentioned so briefly
Additional Tags:	Sleepy Bois Inc as Family , Action , Dave Technoblade and Wilbur Soot and TommyInnit are Siblings , Wilbur Soot and TommyInnit are Siblings , tommy and tubbo are BEST BESTIES , Hurt/Comfort , Daily Bugle , Alternate Universe - Superheroes/Superpowers , Superpowers , It Gets Worse Before It Gets Better , Spider-Man Identity Reveal , Plot Twists , They/Them Pronouns for Eret (Video Blogging RPF) , Villain Clay Dream (Video Blogging RPF) , TommyInnit-centric (Video Blogging RPF) , Spider-Man TommyInnit (Video Blogging RPF)
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Spiderinnit

by [diapason](#)

Summary

Tommy Soot-Watson's got enough on his plate - GCSEs to prep for, wrists that shoot spiderwebs, and the chaotic Dream Team on a mission to take him down with a deadly axe. Being honest about his problems with his family and friends can only make things more complicated. Besides, he doesn't need help from anyone.

(or, the spiderman tommy au nobody asked for but everybody needed! featuring my love for eret, wilbur being the Best Brother, and just buckets of tommy angst ending in eventual tommy love and support)

(UPDATE JAN 4TH NOW WITH TOMMY'S APPROVAL HE SAID HE WAS LIKE SPIDERMAN)

Notes

WELCOME TO SPIDERINNIT ENJOY YOUR STAY

this was written in a three-week haze of late assignments and listening to fall out boy's last of the real ones on repeat for hours at a time so if you're interested in Immersion i would advise you create a playlist with twenty-one plays of last of the real ones and ONE mr brightside and then you will accurately experience what it was like to write this

the whole thing's done already and coming out one chapter a day from now until the 26th, so sub now and you won't miss anything! i am super proud of what i've achieved here so i really hope you love it as much as i loved coming up with it

(obviously none of this is real and if tommy told us not to write fanfiction about him i would delete this immediately!)

- Inspired by [no such mirrors](#) by [Kalopsia](#)

sunday

Chapter Summary

A night in the life.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Tommy sometimes wondered if he might do well to have a support system.

Sure, most days he was perfectly fine fighting Dream and his Team off - like right now, he thought, expertly dodging a volley of Sapnap's solid air projectiles as he backflipped off the side of another building and landed neatly on the balls of his feet on the next roof, god he was so awesome - but the thing about the Dream Team was that they always managed to escape unidentified at the last minute, even when Tommy was moving and attacking and evading at his absolute peak performance to try and stave off the chaos the irritating trio seemed to crave at any cost.

He noticed Dream adjusting his mask, a telltale sign that the villain was about to pick up speed, and reacted accordingly by shifting mental gears to jumpstart his spider sense. Spiderman could have a whole team behind him, he imagined on a higher level of thought, as his base instincts sent chills down the relevant sides of his body moments before Dream rushed past them at top velocity, leading his limbs in sweeps and stops and trips that all shared the goal of hopefully stopping the speedster in his tracks and letting him land a proper hit, or ideally a full-on restraint. Yeah, if he had another hero beside him, with super-strength or something, they could bring down Dream while he held off the other two from the weird little villain gang his arch-nemesis had accrued some time after the first two weeks or so. He felt his arm grab at fabric - holy shit! - and wrench the offending article of clothing up to hopefully meet him mask to mask, but when he looked down all he saw was a taunting scrap of green, and he spun to see Dream on the roof behind him, waving mockingly with the pouch of his trademark neon hoodie torn away. Damn these sticky fingers. Some of the spider traits had turned out to be a curse as well as a blessing.

While he was still processing the consequences of leaving his senses to do all the dirty work, he heard an arrow sail by him and knew that 404 was on his tail. Then it was time to run again - his mental map of this side of town picked out the safest paths across ridges of shingles and flat sides, the tiny sensors in his toes keeping his balance steady on the more

uneven patches of concrete and terracotta, the ever-so-slightly-slower way he perceived the world in spider vision helping him spot 404 as a shadowy figure on the roof across from him who was aiming again already, Jesus, really? He couldn't catch a break with these guys. The projectile grazed the top of his mask - he worried for his hair for a moment, before realising that no stab wound could make his newfound permanent case of Wilbur-level bedhead any worse, and it was all under the mask anyway. It might be nice to have a stylist. A costume designer. This red and blue thing wasn't exactly the peak of colour theory, and it definitely didn't help keep him camouflaged against the backdrop of a rapidly yellowing London sky. Another arrow. Keep running.

Or a guy in the chair? That was a thing they had in spy movies, mainly, but it would be awesome to fit this thing with a Bluetooth headset and have someone on GPS or watching the news or something. Tubbo would be awesome at that.

If he could ever tell Tubbo, that was.

Sapnap sent a massive wall of compressed air straight in his direction, and he jumped it, literally sticking the landing on the side wall below where he'd previously been standing. That could have properly taken him out if his spider senses weren't so amazing and powerful. Yeah, on second thought, maybe his teammates wouldn't be able to stand up to the Dream Team quite as well as he did on his own - and it wasn't like he knew of anyone else on the planet quite like the four of them - and besides, he was a big enough man by himself, without any help. He'd been tanking these almost-daily fights like a boss and STILL managing to get through all the prep work for his rapidly approaching GCSEs just fine. One more week until study leave. He could only really hope the Dream Team were polite enough not to strike during any of his exams, or the local economy would be in a bit of trouble. But hey, he did have the inkling that they were about Techno's age, so maybe like him they would all have final exams too.

"Spiderman."

"Dream. D-Money. Big D."

"Don't patronise me, kid." A rough hand grabbed him by the back of the suit - lucky this thing held on to every inch of his skin with the weird hooking quality all his body hair took on in spider mode, or his mask might have been pulled clean off. Dream rammed him outward, and Tommy countered the force by tucking his legs under to slam Dream in the

shins with both feet, knocking them both flat on the roof. Now he was the one on top of things.

“Dream, I just made you my bitc-”

“What did he just say?” Sapnap’s ice-cold voice joined the conversation.

He stumbled over his words, searching for the next comeback. “You do have to admit that was pretty awesome, though, right?”

“I’ll knock the air outta your lungs if you keep talking, kid.” So he shut up.

Dream shoved him aside to stand up, pulling that intimidating black axe from his back and brandishing it in Tommy’s direction until there was a safe few feet of space between them. 404 seemed to appear out of the growing shadows, silent and deadly as ever, his own face obscured by huge black goggles. (That was where “Gogy” came from. He wished he had someone to make Gogy jokes to, other than the Team themselves, if he could actually tell them without being murdered instantly. He was so funny and the quips just had nowhere to land as it was.)

“You’re not going to stop us, you know that, right, Spiderman?” His tone on the last word was scornful, like Tommy’s moniker was something to hate. He hadn’t wanted that. He’d wanted it to sound a little bit stupid, actually, so he seemed more friendly to the general public. This felt a little bit wrong and a little bit bad. When did everyone start taking Spiderman so seriously?

When lives went on the line, he supposed.

“All I know is that as long as I’ve got the power to stand in your way, that’s what I’ll do. I can’t just let you wreak havoc on innocent lives like this.”

“It’s all only a bit of fun, Spiderman, don’t you understand? It’s a game. The thrill of the manhunt to keep your morals at bay is just another level for us to have fun.”

“Human lives shouldn’t be a *game* to you, Dream,” he spat, rising to his feet (he was REALLY happy about that growth spurt he’d had earlier in the year, otherwise he’d never have stood a chance at having equal footing with Dream, who only beat him out by about an inch), “what’s wrong with you?”

“Oh, Spiderman, there’s nothing wrong with me. You're the one who's wrong."

"Oh yeah?"

Dream swung the axe, and Tommy scrambled back another few steps. "You're wrong about society."

Another swing, another step. Spider sense told him the air was thinning around him; his eyes told him Sappnap was collecting it, forming something of a vibrating shield between them and Tommy. "You're wrong about your morals."

And then not a swing but a jab - this caught him off guard, and he propelled himself backwards just half a step too far. "And you're on the wrong foot."

Landing in a bush was really not as comfortable as you wanted it to be. Especially not when the leaves were secretly all pointy and shit.

By the time he'd scaled the building again, Dream and his cronies were gone.

Chapter End Notes

short one to start, just to introduce you to the concept and the battle format

monday

Chapter Summary

A peaceful day, for once.

Chapter Notes

introducing the nice people in tommy's life!

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

"Spiderman was out again last night!" was the first thing Jack Manifold said when he arrived at their lunch table.

"Was he?" Freddie and Eryn responded at intervals.

"Yeah, he was taking on those three guys again, and he was totally besting them from what I saw!"

"Where did you see it?" Tommy asked, trying his best to sound disinterested.

"Snapchat, it's the only time portrait mode is worth it."

"There's got to be a better way to get footage of Spiderman than Snapchat," Eryn complained, "phone cameras are so shit!"

"I have my proper video camera for Media BTEC next year already," Tubbo piped up. Tommy tuned into his best friend's frequency without even noticing - spider sense seemed to

pick up on the most important person in the room, and while at home that was his dad or Wilbur, in the year eleven canteen it was always going to be Tubbo.

"You're not going out and filming Spiderman fights with your new video camera, Tubbo."

"What? Why shouldn't I?"

It's dangerous. You're not as strong as I am. Things get really damaged, you could be badly hurt. You're too important to me. "Spiderman's not even that cool."

The whole table erupted in dissent, even a few girls from the table across the way looking over to see exactly what Tommy'd said to make all his friends so massively offended and disturbed. Was he really so popular with total strangers too? (Then again, as far as the boys knew, Spiderman WAS a total stranger.)

"You're joking!" Eryn shouted above the other boys's similar cries of disbelief. "You're actually joking, Tommy."

"No? I thought you knew this. I don't really care about all this superhero shit."

"You don't -" Freddie reinflated his carton of chocolate milk in disgust. "He literally saves the city, like, all the time!"

"Yeah, so is it really all that special at this point?"

"I can't believe you, Tom," said a betrayed Jack Manifold, shaking his head in utter disapproval. "Disrespecting Tubbo's idol like that and everything."

Huh?

"After all Spiderman's done for you, Tommy," Tubbo said quietly. Hand on his cheek - he was covering a smile. Tubbo had always had a weak poker face, and it worsened the more he was enjoying the bit. "He's probably saved your life!"

"No. Never. I don't think I've ever actually even seen Spiderman," he lied. The powers had saved his life at least a hundred times since they had come in, although that was almost entirely all due to him putting himself in ever more dangerous situations as Dream's audacity ramped up. Men truly were just the worst.

"No way. Next time we hear he's out, we'll text you," Jack Manifold promised.

"I was actually thinking of programming a text alert service for that sort of thing," admitted Freddie, and he smiled bashfully at the murmurs of assent this created from the rest of the circle. "I'll send the APK when it's done."

"We could form the fanclub," Eryn joked - and everyone laughed at that, except Tubbo, who just nodded approvingly and took a bite of his terrible canteen bacon roll. (Hey, it was their last week at secondary school, they were allowed their little nostalgia trips in the last few breaktimes they had left.)

"I am not joining your stupid fanclub, Eryn," Tommy insisted. "And I'm not downloading the alerts. I have an iPhone, anyway, it won't take an APK."

"You're doing Computer Science GCSE and you have an *iPhone*, Tommy?" Freddie shot back. He was right, but obviously Tommy couldn't let someone else win an argument, because he was the ultimate alpha male of the friend group, and not just because he was the one with supernatural physical ability and processing speed. The spar turned into a full-on shootout of an argument that eventually dragged Eryn and Jack Manifold into the fight as well, leaving Tubbo by the wayside to watch Tommy defend his Apple-shaped corner to the death and eat his bacon roll in silence, occasionally sipping on a Radnor fizz.

He was almost disappointed when the bell went off - the friends were divided again until at least lunchtime. He watched as Tubbo folded his napkin up to carry all the crumbs, dropped his rubbish neatly in the bin that held open the door, and filed off obediently to his Media lesson. Lucky bastard had the good teacher who just showed them films every double

because they'd finished the coursework; Miss Allan was insistent they keep revising key terms until the bitter end in his own Media classes.

School passed a little bit too slowly these days. Of course, it was the surreal period between learning and study leave when nothing felt as important as it really should do anyway and which couldn't quite be replicated in any other part of life, but add to that his new overdrive senses and every passing second ticking by felt another few instants too long and maybe too loud as well. There was an interesting new debate to be had over whether it was worse to sit in environments like these, where every keyboard click and scratch of biro hit his newly sensitive ears, or to feel his eardrums almost explode in total silence. Patrols and fighting were definitely the right volume level, now, though.

Hey, at least he could always spot mistakes now, he thought, backspacing on a typo before Word had time to catch it.

He didn't end up coming to lunch with the boys, electing instead to actually head to the school library and make some flashcards for once, then retreating to the music rooms once he remembered the library's neverending cycle of reaching max volume every ten minutes, being shouted into submission by the librarian, then starting the climb of volume again as soon as she sat down. He messed around with the broken piano in the corner of the empty room. The ventilator hummed. Tubbo knew what pianos did, unlike Tommy.

He really wished he could talk to Tubbo about this.

But he couldn't - even his stupid ideas about getting out there with his good camera and trying to grab photos was dangerous enough, let alone having Tubbo actually *know* that that was Tommy, which would no doubt have him come out to every fight to cheer him on and promptly get the side of a building smashed into his face with one of Sapnap's blades of air that had absolutely zero regard for property damage. Plus, if anyone realised that Tubbo - or any of his friends - or family - knew his identity they could be kidnapped, tortured, killed, waterboarded into confessing Tommy's identity so that the Dream Team could catch him while he was vulnerable. The unspoken promise of anonymity between him and his enemies could be so easily broken at any moment.

If Tubbo knew, though. He could be in the support system.

No! The support system was a pure hypothetical for a world where other people had powers like him and used them for good, not chaos. If Tubbo had powers Tommy would have known about them by now.

That made him feel very guilty.

He headed off to Maths five minutes before break actually ended, ignoring a message from Tubbo that read *if your not coming to lunch thats ok but text me when your free*. He would never be free, he thought (unjustly dramatically), not while this secret hung in the air between them. And since he was never planning to actually *tell* Tubbo, he supposed that he was just never going to text Tubbo again.

Well, not never. Never never. That was Tubbo he was talking about.

Phil was there to pick him up a road away from the school gates, as always (maybe living a few towns away from school was a blessing; everybody probably thought Spiderman actually lived in these parts, not fifteen minutes' drive from town centre).

"Good day?" he asked, as always.

"Yeah," Tommy replied, as always, and then launched into a spiel about the terrible joke that had spawned in maths earlier, only half thinking about it. Could he tell his dad? Phil would undoubtedly stay out of it if Tommy asked, but there was no question that he'd be worried sick about his youngest son literally fighting crime all the time. This was why Tommy snuck out the back window every night, bless his webs for getting him off the ground - Phil never let him stay out past eleven, and sometimes the Dream Team would be keeping him on the end of their string, inches from finally taking them down, long past midnight. When he would, quietly, exhaustedly, come back home and climb through his window again before peeling himself off the ceiling and into bed, he always took care to be silent lest Phil's ears were alerted and he walk in on Tommy peeling the suit off, or god forbid tending to another injury. That laceration from the first time he'd seen just how sharp Sapnap could make the air had been a bitch to sterilise and even more of a bitch to hide.

"How are you feeling about exams?"

"Oh, I'll do the best. I'll get all nines and they'll have to invite me back as an alumni every year to talk to all the children about how smart and clever I am."

"Well, you can't be flawless, because alumni is plural."

Tommy sighed, burying his face in his hands. "Do you have to destroy all of my dreams?"

"No, but I do have to take you down a peg when you start getting a massive head like that."

It wasn't his fault he was bigheaded. He was literally Spiderman. "I hate you."

He'd lied about the whole exams thing. If he was being honest, the fact that study leave started next week, and exams not long after that, scared the shit out of him. He would probably pass the ones that mattered - English, Maths, Media - but that foundation Chemistry paper was almost scarier than 404, the way they both didn't say anything and also tried to murder him.

Again, hilarious, but nowhere to land.

When they got home he put himself back to the flashcard task and tried to ignore the memories of slashing axe blades glinting in the low light. Spider sense was the only thing keeping him stuck to his desk chair, or he would probably have started pacing around the room from the fight-or-flight reflexes that battled with his powers knowing everything was fine tonight. Somehow, the day after a battle he was never exhausted, but the second day would leave him totally drained. So. Double History was going to be fun.

When Wilbur finally crashed through the front door Tommy had long since given up on the flashcards and been doomscrolling Reddit for about half an hour.

"Sorry I'm late, Dad!"

"No worries," Phil called from the kitchen, "dinner's almost ready. Tell your brother."

"I already heard!" shouted Tommy, wary of a taste of Wilbur coming off the high of seeing Niki Nihachu again - but he heard his brother's familiar bounding up the stairs two at a time nonetheless. He kicked at the suit under the desk and really hoped that Wilbur wouldn't spot it.

"Tommy," Wilbur announced grandly at his door, "food time."

"I *know*, Wilbur, I *heard*. "

"Dad gave me an order, who am I to say no?"

"I hate you as well. I wish Techno was still here. At least he doesn't speak to me."

Wilbur held a hand over his chest, wounded. "We all miss Techno, trust me. If I could send your annoying arse to uni instead I'd do it in a heartbeat."

"Well I won't bloody *get* to uni if you keep interrupting me and my flashcards here, will I?"

"I passed without flashcards. And I was in the first newspec year, so it was double hard for me. At least you've got past papers."

"Past papers teach me nothing," Tommy declared - that wasn't true, but he hate hate hated mocks just so very much, and past papers were the real enemy in those situations.

"Well, yeah, you can't exactly do a past paper in editing, I guess."

"How are your A-Levels going anyway?"

Will coughed. "We're doing alright. Study leave's going well. We had a great revision session earlier."

"Yeah, I bet you revised kissing Niki Nihachu really hard -"

"I swear to god, Tommy, there is *nothing* in that -"

"You're blushing!"

"Literally shut the fuck up -"

"You are totally in l-"

"BOYS," yelled Phil from downstairs, and they both fell silent and sheepish. "Stop your bickering and come eat."

How would Wilbur fit into the support system?

Which he wasn't going to have, obviously, but he was allowed to think about it, he decided, chewing on a piece of sausage.

"How was your day? Where did you go?"

"Oh, er, we started at McDonalds, but then we went back to Niki's house for the actual revision bit."

Wilbur would probably be the man on the ground - watching for news on the Dream Team, maybe reporting back to Tubbo, if he'd answer to a kid who was two years younger.

"And, let me just check, we is?"

"Me, Niki, Fundy, Eret," Wilbur replied through a mouthful of mash.

He'd probably tell all his friends about the secret, because Wilbur was a massive blabbermouth and he just loved a good story. Not that they weren't trustworthy, from what he knew of them, but it was another three people to add to the list of liabilities.

"Oh, are you friends with Eret again then?"

"Yeah, I guess. They said sorry and everything."

Oh, Eret might be a bit of a hangup, actually. Tommy wasn't actually sure what they had done to Wilbur and his mates, just that they were considered a traitor to the household for a long time. Maybe they'd side with Dream Team if they knew about Tommy. What would Wilbur do then?

"Alright then. And what were you revising?"

"Music theory mainly - that's the only subject we all do except Fundy, and it's only one exam next week, and then we're free."

Fundy might be trouble as well, in the universe where Tommy was telling people, because he was Mrs Salmon's son and if the news spread to his mother then the staff would know too and then Tommy might actually get shut down on an authoritative level. That, or they'd give him extra time on all his exams. If he was lucky, but he never seemed to be.

"Good, good. And how did you get home from Niki's?"

"Bus." Wilbur took another bite, this one spotted with peas. "My oyster expires in September, by the way, I don't know how you order the proper eighteen-plus ones if you wanted to help me with that some time?"

Niki Nihachu seemed the most valuable to the hypothetical support system, honestly. She was very much a mothering person, always treating Tommy like a child (which he really wasn't), so even if she found out about his evenings-and-weekends job it might not convince her that he was a big man and could look after himself. Still, there was nothing in denying that he liked the way she used to ruffle his hair, back when Wilbur brought her over more often, and she would definitely bake him cookies with his face on them just to lift his mood or something sappy like that.

"No problem. Tommy, you've got to get on that too, you'll need a sixteen to eighteen about the same time."

"Mm-hmm," he contributed absently, still building the world where Niki Nihachu was his number two fan beside Tubbo, probably to Wilbur's massive annoyance and maybe even jealousy. Think of that - he'd definitely cry himself to sleep knowing that his brother was the best and most massive man on Earth and that Niki Nihachu got top billing of the year thirteen crowd in his support system rather than Will.

"What's got you smiling, then, Tom?"

"Oh, um, I was just thinking about something that happened in Media earlier."

"Alright then. Will, back to these revision sessions, are you planning on inviting people here this week?"

"Maybe, if I'm allowed."

"Oh, absolutely, I just need to know when so I can get the house clean and get out of your hair."

"Why out?"

"Well, you're an adult now, I wouldn't want to embarrass you in front of your friends."

"Embarrass me? Phil, I'm eighteen, my friends are allowed to know that I love you. It's current year, it's not cringe to have good parents any more."

"Alright, I just wouldn't want to disturb."

"The way Will talks to Niki Nihachu is disturbing enough," he muttered, and barely even flinched at the responding punch to the arm.

Chapter End Notes

ok kalopsia used to do this notes thing so im stealing it

- i also stole the best friend as biggest fan who wants to take photos from kalopsia but rest assured this story will not become romantic in the way theirs did tommy and tubbo are simply best besties and also babies
- i didn't know tommy "canonically" has an iphone when i wrote that plot point into the story lmao but he's the only one of his friends who does so they can all get the alert but he can't
- also i didn't quite know this when i wrote this chapter but their eating of terrible canteen food this week was actually a group decision to try it all one last time before they leave the lower school
- tommy learns what it's like to be autistic and sensitive challenge
- thus begins a pattern of tubbo texting tommy and tommy just absolutely airing tubbo lol
- i love that 404 joke so much tbh it feels so in voice
- wilbur was in my year so this counts as a vent fic to cry about my gcse and fantasise about the a level experience i didn't get because corona
- oh yeah my headcanon with this is that tommy becoming spiderman happened exactly at the point the uk should have gone into lockdown
- as you can tell from the tags niki fundy eret are actually going to play a part in this story!
- even i don't know what eret actually did but i do know how they got back to being

everybody's friend again but you can't know hehe

- niki tommy bond >>>>>

- will tommy actually be having mates over? place your bets now

anyway that was chapter 2 hope you enjoyed now i have to go reformat the little message that shows up at the end

tuesday

Chapter Summary

Tommy grows tired of the same reminders.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Tubbo had exciting news to share at the school gates the next morning.

“Fifty pounds each?”

“Yeah,” Tubbo grinned proudly, “I knew my new camera was going to come in handy.”

“Seriously, fifty pounds?”

“Per photo!”

“And this is coming from J Schlatt Jameson himself?”

“Yeah, I was in the room with him and everything.”

“That’s insane.”

“I know! Beanie Alex from Year 12 went in after me, but I don’t think he takes Media, so there’s no chance he can get better shots than me.”

“Yeah, I’m pretty sure he does music, Wilbur’s mentioned him one or two times.”

“I mean, you *can* take three subjects, we both know that. What if he’s a Photography student?”

“He’d still never be better than you, Tubbo, obviously.”

He soured a little, remembering that this money would be for a very dangerous and inadvisable cause. Tubbo seemed to immediately notice his expression change, and switched tacks.

“So Mr Brett was talking about this thing called squaring the circle last lesson once we’d finished our proper revision...”

He was sitting next to Freddie a few hours later in the dreaded double History lesson when the first sign of trouble came. The fatigue of Sunday’s fight was in full force, having started to set in about twelve minutes into first period, and only his spider sense kept him sitting back straight in his chair instead of slumping down to hide in his arms on the desk as they went over the last few marks of Paper 3 again. It seemed he was doing better than some of the kids across the room, at least - Deo was making no attempt whatsoever to hide his boredom, blatantly on his phone under the table. He wished he had so much confidence outside the suit.

The amplified sound of Freddie’s phone vibrating knocked him out of his reverie - his head whipped around to watch as his mate covertly pulled the device out of his inside pocket and scan the notification. “Those villains are in town right now.”

“Dream Team?” he whispered, already on high alert.

“Oh, is that what they’re called? Yeah, probably. The green guy and his lot. They’re up at the train station.”

“Right.” His voice had pitched about an octave. He hoped Freddie didn’t notice the awkward timing when he asked to use the toilet exactly forty seconds later.

It was really annoying that he had to get a fair ways away from school and towards town before the buildings got tall enough to swing from. How awkward must he have looked scrambling out the window of the furthest stall only to run through trees for ages, sneaking around the back of back gardens to hopefully avoid being seen. Why did he live in the suburbs? These powers were built for skyscrapers. Then again, he should probably be thankful Central London wasn’t facing the Dream Team’s wrath, or the Shard would have a reason to look all broken at this rate.

He heard them before he saw them - the whoosh of manipulated oxygen and the threatening bang of explosive-laden arrows and the hum it left in the air whenever Dream switched into super speed. As he approached, shooting his first web to bring him up to battle territory, the air began to thin around him. That was going to hit later. Eventually he managed to jump from the right roof and round a corner to see the Dream Team absolutely wrecking shit right here on the edge of town - they’d probably already completely thrown the trains off schedule with the debris they were collecting on their rampage. Dream was laughing as he seemed to vanish from his place atop the overpass and reappear on the roof next to Tommy’s.

“You like it, Spiderman? We did this just for you!”

“You’ve really picked a bad time, you know that?”

“We like to shake things up like that,” Dream teased daringly. Tommy felt his fists tighten at his sides.

“What did you want, anyway?”

“Oh, chaos, as always. And to send you a little message.”

Behind their conversation, Sappnap seemed to be hard at work sawing the bridge connecting the two train platforms in half. Tommy fired off a linear volley of webs to throw the levitating villain to the ground for a few minutes and hopefully take his destructive powers away.

Exactly as he'd hoped, he saw in his periphery, Sapnap cockily dodged the first throw and was promptly ensnared by the following three. "A message?"

"For sure. We just wanted to say that we heard you're starting to become a little bit of a household name. We can't be dealing with that - nobody even seems to know what to call us, except you, and that's because I told you."

"Well, maybe if you were cooler, they might ask you, instead of -"

"Anyway," Dream interrupted icily, "a little bird told 404 that they're paying up big bucks for photos of you, and he told me, and, well, we just can't be having that."

"404 talks?"

"Shut up. So the message is that we're gonna be on the lookout for any... aspiring photographers you might know," he sounded like he was smirking, "and we're gonna be targeting them as well. So don't tell any of your friends where you're gonna be, because 404's gonna be there too, and it's not gonna end pretty."

"Seriously? You fucked up half the town this much just to tell me not to have inside agents?"

"Sure. Well, the fun of the game is always our main priority, but we just wanted to be considerate and let you know." He saw Sapnap had freed himself and was fast approaching out of the corner of his eye.

"Where is 404, then?"

"Busy," was Dream's only answer.

"Hey, motherfucker," Sapnap snarled, "that was a dirty trick."

“You started it, getting me out here at half past eleven on a Tuesday. I’ve got lunch in a bit, you know.”

“Oh yeah?” asked Dream. “Do tell us more about your schedule, Spiderman.”

“Piss off.”

“Anything you can’t miss? Anything you’d get in trouble for skipping out on to stop us?”

“I said piss off,” he repeated, taking a step towards Dream. The spider grip in his foot intensified when it realised he’d almost sent himself pitching down the slope of the roof. His knees bent accordingly, putting him in a more aggressive stance. Good. Let Dream see him as an aggressor.

"God, I'd love to see your face walking out of a job interview and seeing our masterpiece. I'd love to see your face at all, actually." Spider sense directed his eyes to Dream's slowly moving hand. "It would make it much easier to *kill* you!"

Then the axe was swinging again, and his feet leapt into action before his brain did, routing a wide loop around the nearby area, ideally avoiding the most destruction as he ran. Over the Turkish restaurant and the Subway and the cinema complex and the Tesco, clearing wide multi-lane roads of traffic. He was not excited to learn to navigate *that* hell of a one-way system when he learned to drive in the summer. Wilbur had complained enough after all of his own lessons when he was Tommy's age.

Eventually, he came to a stop on top of the old bingo hall. It was a listed building, but an empty one, perpetually covered by opaque plastic and boards for as long as he remembered, and if it went down the only people who would probably actually be upset were the government. He spun to watch for his foes - Dream and Sapnap were not far behind.

"What else do you want?"

"Oh, nothing else," laughed Dream, "we won't take up too much more of your time now we've seen you."

"Good, because I was actually busy..."

"Run on home, then. Nothing stopping you."

"I'm not going if you don't."

They stared each other down for a long moment, Sapnap hovering a step behind. Then Dream's shoulders fell and he sighed. "Fine. But I'll be keeping an eye on you, Spiderman."

Then he took Sapnap by the arm and they whooshed off in the opposite direction, leaving Tommy alone on a roof and probably late for lunch. Sighing, he moved to swing back to school before a civilian could clock where he was headed.

Hard no on the support system from Dream, then.

"Where were you?" Tubbo immediately asked when he arrived at the lunch table, still a little out of breath from changing back into uniform. He sounded almost angry.

"Sorry," Tommy huffed, sliding into his seat as usual. "I was doing business things."

"You just left History and didn't come back," Freddie accused.

"Yeah, sorry for leaving you."

"No, I don't care about that, we weren't having a conversation or anything, I just thought you would come back -"

"Oh my god," Jack Manifold interrupted, thankfully, "Spiderman was spotted in town earlier!"

Oh, god. This was the worst thing ever.

"What was happening?"

"Those villains were at the station, they were destroying everything, all the trains out of town are cancelled until further notice - and when Spiderman arrived he just led them away and sent them packing!"

"Awesome," Tubbo breathed, smiling already.

"Do you not know what the villains are called?" Tommy tested.

"Nope," replied Jack Manifold, popping the P.

"You said Dream Team earlier, didn't you?" *Oh, shit.*

"Maybe. I don't know why you'd trust me on a Spiderman thing, though, I don't follow all that."

"Ooh, I like Dream Team," Eryn said, looking up from his phone. Probably reading the post Jack Manifold had seen.

"Do you? I think it's a bit shit, myself."

"Tommy, you *just* told us not to trust you on these things."

"It is pretty cool," said Tubbo, "but Spiderman is way cooler. He's literally a man who's a spider. What do the Dream Team have? A fast guy, someone who flies, and an archer? They're no match for him."

404's not just an archer. He has x-ray vision. And Sapnap doesn't fly, he moves the air.

"I wish I could have seen it, though," Freddie lamented.

"Really? It's the same thing almost every day."

"Yeah, but seeing Spiderman is still cool the twentieth time compared to the first!"

"You're whipped."

"Maybe you're just a joyless freak," he shot back. Tommy flinched.

"Anyway, *I* wish I could have been there because I want to get those photos J Schlatt was talking about."

"Photos?"

"Oh yeah, I only told Tommy! Basically..."

The rest of the day passed thankfully uneventfully, all sense of fatigue once again banished as his body went back into 'what if there's more fighting?' mode where it would stay at least

until that night. He made it through double French in a blur, which was just as well, because they had clearly given up on the year elevens and were just showing that movie about the choirboy who burned the school down again. He'd never committed it to memory and he wasn't about to start.

Phil was waiting when he got outside the gates, as always.

"Tom."

"Dad."

"Any reason you weren't in school Period 4 today?"

His stomach dropped.

"What?"

"Well, you see, the school called. They wanted to know if I had authorised your absence in the middle of the day."

"Yeah?"

"And I had no idea what they were talking about."

"Mm-hmm."

"So I told them you were at the dentist -"

Tommy crumpled. "Thanks, Dad."

"Alright, yeah, it's fine, mate." Tears were threatening to fill Tommy's eyes, so he moved to sit in the back seat instead of standing in front of Phil any longer. "I thought it was probably important and you'd have your reasons. And you don't have to tell me why if you really don't want to. I just need to know you're alright."

"Yeah. Yeah, I'm okay, Dad." He swallowed. "It was -" his brain pulled the lie from a darker place than he'd hoped "- I had a bit of a... a panic attack."

"Oh, Tommy," breathed his father, and started driving.

"Um, I just needed a bit of time out after that. I promise I was back in school for lunch."

"No, Tommy, you can take as much time as you need if you - get like that, there's no shame in it."

"I know, Dad." Shame filled his lungs. "I'd tell you I needed taking home if I did."

"Good. Good."

The rest of the drive was silent. The guilt of lying seemed to swamp the car, keeping him in that same terrible mood long after they pulled into the drive of the Soot-Watson household. Phil paused before he undid the child lock.

"But, Tom, if you're having trouble in lessons you should let someone know. I don't want you to do worse in these exams just because you're in a bad spot mentally. You'd be so annoyed at yourself for it, I can imagine it."

"I'm fine with school. I promise."

"Good! But asking for help is always okay. There's no shame -"

"I don't need any help," he snapped.

Phil was silent. Then the doors clicked. "Alright, mate."

Wilbur was out for dinner, so he skipped dinner.

The lights in the corridor outside turned violently on at a little past eleven while Tommy lay unable to sleep in bed, staring at the wall. The door creaked.

"Tommy, I have a question for you -"

"Not tonight, Will."

"Oh." He didn't look, but he knew Wilbur was doing that stupid pouty look. "Are you -"

"I'm alright. Stuff at school."

"... Okay."

"You can ask me in the morning if you want to."

"Nah, the bit will be dead by then. Can I... ask about -"

"Please don't."

"Alright." Wilbur sounded subdued. "If it's trouble with your mates, you know I was just there, I can -"

"I don't need any bloody help!" He shifted to put his face in the pillow, terminally.

"Fine, fine. Just... if you need me. Love you."

"Love you," he said, muffled, wishing Wilbur would just get out of the room.

And then he did, and Tommy was alone.

Support system.

That was a good one.

Chapter End Notes

NOTES

- hehehehehe the moment i remembered j jonah jameson i just Knew what i had to do
- it's actually down in the notes as "schlatt is j jonah jameson and quackity is his phat ass secretary" but then i realised tommy wouldn't even be entering the building so beanie alex from year 12 was born he'll be back one (1) more time to cameo before fic's out
- this tiredness mechanic is entirely irrelevant for the entire rest of the fic because there's no more extended scenes two days after a fight >:)
- what does dre know? how does he know it? all this and more will not be answered probably until the gogy companion fic if i ever finish that
- if i set this in my home london town and at my old school no i didn't <3
- the boys share one brain cell and eryl usually has it but tommy borrowed it for the fight and left it in his suit hence why they don't notice the terrible timing of "tommy vanish, spiderman show up"

- i really hope you could FEEL the tension in that phil scene bc i tried so hard to drag it out
- but also supportive dadza best father i know
- no tommy you have to eat food don't you know what's going to happen to you tomorrow you need your strength :(
- i forgot how bad of a state all this fighting leaves tommy in he's not eating not sleeping baby honey sweetheart child you need to take care of yourself
- eating is a symbol of friendship in this fic though so maybe he needs to sort out his friend problems before he can truly enjoy a meal...
- aaaaaaaand i love wilbur so much also he is best brother

this was the last chapter before shit starts actually going down i think, hope you enjoyed the angst, There Will Be More

wednesday

Chapter Summary

Laughs are had, memories are made.

Chapter Notes

or, the graphic violence tag finally becomes relevant.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

On Wednesday it was hot enough that the teachers finally allowed them to take off their blazers. That brought some joy to the morning, if nothing else.

"You know," Eryn said, mouth full of panini bread and cheese, "your text alert should probably be for the villains instead. If we knew what they were called."

"I still like what Tommy said," Tubbo submitted, "Dream Team."

"Really? It still sounds lame to me." He'd laughed when Dream first told him. It was ludicrous to think back to when the masked man formally introduced himself, and later his friends, although at the time it had scared him to learn their names. Something about a man who only went by numbers aiming an arrow straight down your chest was very intimidating.

"Yeah, Dream Team's not so bad," Freddie agreed. He was matching Eryn with the panini, but seemed to have recalled how truly awful they were after the first bite, and now it lay further untouched on the picnic table where they sat outside.

"Spiderman is far cooler, though," Jack Manifold protested. Tommy smiled. Nice to have someone in his corner.

"I know, I know! He's definitely the one to root for. I just always liked a good supervillain. Batman and Superman never really did it for me."

"Well, DC were the only ones who ever really took over the superhero market, so they're allowed to underperform sometimes, right?"

"We should expect better from content creators, Jack."

"If you say so."

"If I had the money for it, I'd start my own huge comic and movie franchise. I could put Spiderman in it."

"You'd need a proper budget to do Spiderman justice," Eryn cut in. "Like, millions."

Tubbo straightened up. "I might have a bit of money to do something after I get those awesome photos of Spiderman next time there's a fight on."

"Yeah, but not millions, Tubbo!"

"I know that! I just thought since Tommy and I do Media we could get away with making, like, a short film or something. Do you think Tommy would make a good Spiderman?"

Surprisingly enough, the general sentiment around the table seemed to be no, so he joined in. "I'm too massive to be Spiderman."

"How can you tell how tall he is? All the footage is so shaky."

"Yeah, but it doesn't matter how tall he is, I'm bigger. Plus that suit looks really uncomfortable. I wouldn't want to put one of those on to save my life." The suit was actually really nice and form-fitting, like a different kind of onesie, he reckoned. He'd worked very hard on making it look good and letting his spider sticking powers still work through the gloves and shoes.

"Yeah, I reckon it must get really sweaty in that thing," Freddie shuddered.

The conversation shifted after that, letting Tommy breathe a little easier for a while. He got engrossed in a debate with Tubbo over the validity of liking liquorice, somehow.

"It's not that bad!"

"You are literally insane, Tubbo, I don't know what to tell you."

"Why would they sell it if nobody liked it?"

"They sell coffins, nobody likes those!"

"There's a difference between functional and - is that your *brother*?"

Tommy turned. Sure enough, there was Wilbur, flanked by his three best mates.

"What are they doing here? Sixth form let out on Friday."

"No idea." Tommy didn't take his eyes off his brother, who was marching towards their tree-shaded table out of the sunlight. What did he want?

"Hello!" called Wilbur brightly when he got close enough. Niki Nihachu waved behind him.

"You know you don't go to this school any more, right, Will?"

"I mean, we are allowed to be here if we want to."

"Yeah, for the sixth form library, for studying!"

"But I wanted to come and embarrass you instead. So. Here I am. Guys, these are Tommy's friends. Tommy's friends, these are my friends."

"I'm Fundy," said the redhead, unprompted.

"We know you're Fundy," Freddie rolled his eyes, "your mum teaches DT."

"And that means everybody knows who I am?"

"Well, yes."

"Will -" Tommy tried again "- why are you here?"

"I told you, to embarrass you."

"Is that seriously it?"

"Well, no, it's also because I love you."

Tommy's face reddened. "I - me too, obviously, but -"

"And it's working!"

Wilbur rounded the table and made to shove himself in next to Tommy. Tubbo moved aside appropriately.

"You really want to sit with a bunch of year elevens?"

"Why not? Children can be interesting people."

"I'm not a child!"

Niki Nihachu snickered, balancing herself on the edge of the seat across, while Fundy squished in on Eryn's side. Eret simply raised a foot to lean on their knee beside a suddenly very small looking Jack Manifold. "You kind of are, Tommy."

"Don't be rude to me, Niki Nihachu. I'm not the one who Wilbur is always writing love songs about."

"I don't do that," Wilbur insisted, smooth on the surface but with a hint of a voice crack.

Niki Nihachu hid her clear revelry in the thought. "I don't care what Will does in his spare time, I just wanted to find out why I'm coming back here in mine."

Wilbur lowered his voice. "I'll explain when they go back to lessons."

"Okay, and until then?"

"You remember the briefing on the bus."

"Hasn't your oyster card expired or something?" Tommy remembered.

"Not yet, keep up."

Eret seemed to be making themselves very much at home on Jack Manifold and Freddie's end of the table. They gestured to the unfinished panini. "Are you gonna eat that?"

"It's probably cold."

"Yeah, but I haven't had one since about year eight."

"Fine, sure, yeah, take it."

Eret took one bite and grimaced sharply before putting it back down. "I now remember why I haven't had one since year eight."

"They really are shit, aren't they?"

"I think I used to eat them daily," Fundy chimed in. "Hand it over - I don't care if it's cold."

"Yeah, you wouldn't, would you, furry?" Eret laughed as they passed the panini across the table. Tommy didn't really see the significance.

"Hey, if it poisons me, at least I know you're here."

"Talk to Niki about that one."

Adults.

Wilbur seemed to have gotten distracted and was in a mood of making songs, which Tubbo was nodding his head to. Tommy cleared his throat.

"You've got to have some ulterior motive here, Will."

"Nope. Pure embarrassment. I should have brought my guitar, actually."

"Oh, god, no..."

"See, you're happy about that, but at least the songs would sound good if they had chords behind them!"

"Do one about Spiderman," Tubbo suggested.

"Spiderman?"

"The superhero," Niki Nihachu supplied.

"No, I know who Spiderman *is*, but why would he need a song?"

"His theme song. I'm gonna make a film about him with my Schlatt money."

"I'm... not even going to *try* and decode that sentence." Wilbur leaned his head back and mumbled under his breath for a second. "Yeah, I really don't know enough about the guy for that."

"He can swing from webs and he fights criminals, what more do you need?"

"A lot, usually!"

"Fine, I'll have a go." Tommy had never heard Tubbo try to compose before. *This should be interesting.* "Um... Spiderman, Spiderman, he does things a spider can. Has a web, fights a crime, runs away just in time, look out, here comes Spiderman."

Tommy considered this. "Yeah, not bad, actually."

"You could make that a proper theme song if you tried, Tubbo," Wilbur praised.

"I changed my mind, it's terrible."

"Tommy!" Tubbo reached behind Wilbur to hit him in the shoulder blade. The old scar from his first big injury was there, he knew, even if it didn't sting to touch any more.

"You're not allowed to get musician compliments from my musician brother."

"Am I not allowed to appreciate a former schoolmate's talent, Tommy?"

"Not when it's Tubbo!" *He's my best friend.* "He's rubbish at everything. He can't even read."

"I can read a little."

"Spell obnoxious."

"What does that mean again?"

"It means Tommy," Wilbur responded, quickly enough that Tommy suspected he'd been sitting on that one for a good few years.

"I hate you." But he was smiling a little, and he knew Will could see that.

"Well, then, my work here is done!"

"Really? You came here to make me hate you?"

"No, I came here to embarrass you, like I said, and if you hate me being here then that objective is complete."

"I'm not embarrassed -"

"Really? I suppose I'll just have to stay and befriend Tubbo a bit longer -"

"No, no, no, I am, I am, I am, I am, I am, I swear, you can go away!"

"What time is it? I might have to go anyway."

"Just gone 10:20," Eret read off their watch.

"Ah, that's the end of break, right?"

"Yeah," Tommy confirmed sullenly.

"Alright, we should probably go, then. Don't want to keep you away from your last ever lessons at this school."

"If I could skip straight to study leave, I would," Tubbo admitted.

"Well we can't always have what we want, can we Tubbo?" It stung a little to say, knowing what he wanted most was to let Tubbo in on the whole secret, let him share the fears and joys of being Spiderman, and yet knowing at the same time that it would only put Tubbo in greater danger. He couldn't have that.

"Not with time, I guess."

"We'll get out of your hair." Wilbur stood, brushed nothing off himself, and finagled his way back off the bench and into the open field again. It really wasn't fair that no matter how tall Tommy seemed to get, Wilbur always kept that three-inch lead. He might hit six foot five by the time he left university.

"What was up with that?" Jack Manifold wondered aloud on their way to Physics. They had always suffered through each Science class together on shared looks from across the classroom alone. Eryn was taking triple sciences - Tommy would have rather taken a hit from Dream's axe.

"I have literally no idea."

"Well, it seemed like he was trying to get your mind off something," he suggested.

"Maybe."

Off what?

When school finally, crawlingly came to an end, Tubbo was waiting outside his Computer Science classroom with a bag in his hands. Tommy really hoped it wasn't what he thought it was.

"It's my good camera!"

"Of course it is," he muttered. "And you waited all day to show me this because?"

"It was in my locker," Tubbo explained simply.

"So you want to go and wait for Spiderman in town or something?"

"No, I just wanted to test it on you. You're a good base model, I think. Spiderman is tall and lanky like you. You'd think for all those acrobatics he'd be more muscular."

Tommy flexed his stomach, trying to feel for abs without touching. Maybe.

"Alright. Only cause it's you."

They headed to the recreation ground outside school - the exercise equipment someone had put there for old people would be great to do parkour runs off, he thought. On the way, they passed Phil in the car. Tubbo waved. Tommy saluted. Phil just watched them walk.

"Right, what should I be expecting in the world of taking pictures of Spiderman? Motion blur, obviously," Tubbo began.

“Weird angles,” he filled in, “Spiderman is always on top of buildings and shit.”

“Well, we can’t get you up the side of a building, so forget that for now.” If only he knew.

“Er... the villains might get in the way?”

“Yeah! If I could snap a face-off, that would be the coolest picture ever,” Tubbo gushed. Tommy’s stomach clenched again for entirely different reasons.

“Do you actually understand how dangerous this job is, Tubbo?” he asked quietly, meeting his friend’s eyes.

“Well, yeah.” He looked confused. “That’s why Schlatt is paying so much for it.”

“You could literally get killed. A bit of building could fall on your head and you would *die*. ”

“I don’t think I would. I think Spiderman would save me, probably.”

“You can’t rely on Spiderman.”

“Oh, you would say that, you hate him. Yeah, Spiderman would definitely save me.”

He opened his mouth to fight the claim, but closed it again when he realised that yes, Tubbo was correct, Spiderman *would* save him from whatever stupid fucking situation he put himself into, because Tubbo was his best friend. If there really was a bit of building coming for Tubbo’s head he would undoubtedly launch himself across a busy road to shove him out of the way, or web the approaching shrapnel in another direction, or maybe web *Tubbo* somewhere safe, damned though he would be if Dream noticed the urgency. This was why the support system was such a bad idea in practice - he couldn’t trust his friends to behave themselves in a battle, knowing that they knew Spiderman would look out for them in the face of death.

“Just *please* keep away from the action, okay?”

“Fine, Tommy, if you insist, *jesus*. I don’t know why it’s so important to you.”

Because you’re so important to me.

They did a simple enough little shoot, Tommy feigning ignorance of the classic Spiderman poses, Tubbo patiently working him through “learning” the way to shoot a web (fortunately he could do the movement without anything actually coming out) and crouch with his hands by his feet on top of one of those weird stunted bar arches (the sticky didn’t deactivate, less fortunately) and face off against an imaginary Dream (he really hoped Dream never got wind of Tubbo taking the photography gig). Tubbo’s smile never faded while he was running around figuring out angles and shots and zoom versus distance. It was a really nice half hour they spent pissing about in the park together; it reminded him of summers before this one, where they still had all the time in the world and next September always held the promise of coming back to school together.

Tubbo wasn’t coming to proper film school with him. He’d liked the Media course at their home sixth form and the idea of already knowing all your teachers more than he’d cared about the prestigiousness of the school. *It doesn’t even matter until you get to uni*, he’d justified, and Tommy had scoffed. It mattered so much. Tubbo really was stupid. And he didn’t know how to read, either.

“I’m happy with that if you are,” Tubbo concluded beside him, and Tommy nodded distractedly.

“Phil’s still waiting.”

“Does that mean you want to go home?”

“It can do.”

“Okay, Tommy, thank you for being my Spider-model, I’m going to go home as well,” Tubbo smiled.

“He’d give you a lift if you asked.”

“Nah. I have my bus pass.”

“Well... have a good bus ride, Tubbo.”

“Thank you, I’ll try.”

When he told Phil what they’d been doing to make him wait for the past half an hour, he just smiled in the rearview mirror.

Tubbo texted him again one more time before bed.

but you can get what you want sometimes because i got to take pictures with you today :)

His best fucking friend in the entire world.

Everything started to go terribly at about half past ten - he’d been waiting to come off the unwanted high of battle with about half his body under the covers for a while before that, on and off with picking up his phone and trying to leave it on his bedside table so he could sleep faster. This was one of those deafening silence moments. Not even the wood pigeon that lived in their garden seemed to want to break the suffocating quiet on this night in particular.

That was probably why he’d picked up on the distant sounds of exploding arrows so quickly.

He was up in a flash, reaching for the familiar back pocket of his rucksack that he always kept the suit in, casting aside his pyjamas and struggling into the feet, hopping around the room to pull it up as he straightened the mask with the other side. Then he was out of the window, crawling down the speckled surface of the back wall with the same hatred for the strangely textured thing he always retained (what was wrong with exterior designers however many years ago?) and scaling the fence with ease. Left. He decided to run the roofs for this stretch of ground - hopefully everyone was asleep. Straight on now - no, right a bit - no - yeah, down here. Towards town. Obviously. Seemed like 404 had been upset about missing out on the action last time and come out to have a bit of a play himself. He could only hope it was just 404.

Except of course he was the unluckiest kid on the face of the planet, and the trio were all waiting for him in the semi-deserted streets of town centre.

Another explosive arrow went off somewhere behind him. He really hoped that was repairable.

They fell into their dance as easily as he fell into a fight with his brother, Tommy trying to lead the chaos away from any populated areas, yelling at errant teenage gangs to get out of the line of fire, Dream and his lackeys forging on with zero regard for respect or decency when it came to the buildings around them. Towards the river or out to the field in the other direction? Spider sense turned him on his heel and commanded river. He just really hoped they didn't blow up the theatre, because Wilbur had, like, *just* landed a summer job there as an usher. Every noise echoed and blended in his ears - the whizz of Sapnap's air projectiles that his body ducked and weaved on a level below consciousness, Dream's maniacal laughter as he did something stupid and chaotic that Tommy had no time to turn and look at, the pounding of his own feet and his heart atop each new building. Shops turned into houses turned into boats turned into the empty dock of the Marina. Closed hours ago, that was crucial for this one.

"What is it this time?"

"The usual. Chaos," Sapnap smirked, as though it was obvious. Which it was, he supposed.

"Did 404 baby rage when he couldn't make it to our little meeting last time?"

“I don’t even know what that means,” said Dream, frankness definitely covering for embarrassment. Maybe he could get away with cringing them into submission.

“He’s going a little bit off the deep end with the explosive arrows tonight,” he explained, ducking a stray air shot that Sapnap had probably thought he could get away with, not realising that spider sense was far too smart for his tricks. “I heard him all the way from my house.”

“Oh really? That gives us a range.”

“I didn’t know he was coming tonight,” Sapnap muttered to Dream.

“You know one of my powers is literally enhanced hearing, right?”

“Shut it, kid.” Sapnap was definitely frowning. He wished he could read Dream as well, instead of that stupid mask getting in the way. “Is he supposed to -”

“We can ask him about it tomorrow,” Dream cut his second-in-command off and turned the focus back to Tommy. “You wanna give up now and let us take you in? Because I can do this all night.”

“Well, I’d definitely rather you didn’t.”

“Cool.” He reached for the axe.

“Hey, woah woah woah, not so hasty! You could have someone’s arm off with that.”

“Fingers, actually, was the plan. I was wondering how many parts of you I’d have to cut off one by one until you couldn’t attach yourself to a wall any more. Or maybe just until you screamed.”

“You’re a psychopath,” he whispered, not quite sure how else to word it.

“Yep! No, new plan, change of plans, we’re gonna see how much it takes to make Spiderman scream for mercy tonight. Remember, if you give up, it means I win. And I haven’t been keeping score since we met, but I’m pretty sure you have yet to really knock me down, and I’ve got you... what, twenty times? Thirty?”

“You disgust me.”

“Thirty-five, maybe. God, it’s been so long since we met, Spiderman.” He added a perverse twist of elongation to his tone, almost flirty. He wondered how quickly Dream would stop that shit if he knew Tommy was still in secondary school. He almost considered telling him, it made him that uncomfortable. But no - that would be a dead giveaway. “Oh, does that get under your skin? Does that make you upset? Good. I see your body tensing, I know you hate it when I get all playful.”

“If I win, do you leave this place alone?”

“Haven’t you figured the pattern out by now? Every time you actually win - and that’s not often - we give you a week. Every time *we* win, we’re back on the playing field pretty much always the next day. We may be men of chaos, but we do have rules.”

“What, so you’re - testing me?”

“You could call it that. And right now, the test is how far you can run before I get tired of keeping your slow pace. Get moving.”

Flash. Swing of the axe. Tommy ran.

Somehow, even as his legs found footing on higher and higher rooftops in the chase back around and concerningly close to civilisation, his mind still wandered back to Tubbo. He didn't live far from here. Tommy *really* hoped he hadn't noticed the fight. Maybe he could get a support system exclusively for keeping Tubbo away from Spiderman. Who would help with that? Freddie and Eryn would probably be fine with keeping him distracted. It was a stretch, but maybe Tubbo's little sister would be on to guard the home team. Yeah, she'd be interested in being tasked with annoying her brother all the time. Especially if he paid her. But would Tubbo pay more to get out of it? He was the one with the job, sort of. Oh dear, Tommy was trying to get Tubbo unemployed here.

And, if anything, by thinking about this stupid support system every chance he got, he was trying to get all his mates killed.

He assessed his surroundings - he'd managed to route his two pursuers past town centre and across a line of terraced houses that split the shopping district from the bus station. He knew there was another good bit of open space here he could use to minimise destruction. Sapnap seemed to be getting more pissed off the further they travelled, and every few seconds a new shard of air grazed his arm or his side in a way that felt like he was inching closer to aiming straight for the heart. "You guys show too much mercy," he heard the man criticise his partner in crime into the wind, "I'm all for a manhunt, but we could catch him up in literally less than a second if we tried."

"Oh, I know. We have all the power here. Hit me if you get bored."

Which wasn't a great thing to hear thirty feet off the ground and running both for his life and the lives of innocents.

Tommy hit a stroke of genius not long after, dipping into a tree and ducking under the hunters as they ran on ahead, assuming they'd lost him down the side of a house. He found himself in somebody's back garden and set to work tailing the pair as closely as possible to ensure they weren't wrecking shit without being spotted. These gardens felt familiar, the layouts all homogenous, flowerbed and grass and flowerbed and fence and grass and children's trampoline and skip the grass and fence and -

Open street. He routed left around the building and watched Sapnap and Dream stop dead, likely coming to the realisation they'd truly lost him. Then Dream vanished into super speed and left Sapnap, apparently, on threat duty.

“Oh, Spiderman,” he practically sang. Tommy scanned for somewhere to avoid from the duo. It was so dark out - probably well past eleven now. He used the darkness as cover, steering clear of the streetlamps that dotted the road, skulking like a fox through people’s side alleys, and eventually finding a fairly distant roof to climb, settling in the dip of someone’s attic window and laying low.

“Oh!” an entirely too familiar voice met his ears, and he froze. “Spiderman!”

Of bloody COURSE he’d managed to end up literally on top of Tubbo’s house. While he was avoiding uncertain death.

“I was just about to sneak out and see if I could still catch your fight,” Tubbo continued obliviously, below him on that weird balcony bit outside his room. “But I guess I didn’t have to. Can I have a picture?”

He didn’t reply. Sapnap was definitely going to hear Tubbo at this rate. Scratch what he’d said yesterday, *this* was The Worst Thing Ever.

“Yeah, you’re right, it’s not as good if you’re not doing anything, Schlatt won’t pay me fifty quid for a shot of someone’s feet on my roof. Why are you not doing anything, anyway?”

“Spiderman, I can smell you,” taunted Sapnap from afar. Tubbo didn’t seem to have caught it, which meant he was losing them. Tommy shifted to get the air-controller back into his field of vision.

“Oh, are you hiding?”

“Yes,” he finally hissed, wishing Tubbo would just go back to bed, hoping he didn’t know Tommy’s whisper by ear.

“Oh, I’m sorry! I’ll go back inside. I’ll head out a bit earlier tomorrow, I reckon, maybe I’ll actually be in town when you lot get there if the buses are on.”

If we’re out tomorrow, that spells bad news for today.

Seven long seconds later, he finally heard the balcony door latch and Tubbo return to safety. What a fucking close one. He needed to take the fight far, far away from Tubbo.

“I took a huge loop,” he suddenly heard Dream explaining, and knew the pair were back together, “and I didn’t see the kid, but I did figure out what’s going on with the pissbaby.”

“Yeah?”

“Yeah, he just wanted to keep us on our toes, he’s been shooting shit up in the middle of town this whole time. I’m actually impressed he had the brain cells to play us like that this week.”

“Well, you know 404, he’s full of surprises.”

“You’re calling him that when he’s not listening?”

“Well, Spiderman probably definitely *is* listening, and he gets no clues.”

“Oh, yeah, I am a dumbass, I forgot about that. Spiderman, come back and stop 404! You know you want to! Think of all the people those arrows have fucked up already, if you’re gonna go the moral route.”

He hated it, but he actually took the order from Dream, and started swinging back towards town central.

Once he was tuned back into the explosions it became clear that 404 really hadn't stopped firing through their whole fight, which was coming on for... very long. There were craters all over the now-empty roads, promising a lot of work for the council very soon, and probably diverting all the buses too. One spot in front of the train station was at least a foot deep in black and smoking damage from the number of times 404 had fired on it. The explosives were tiny things but they could pack a punch in large number.

The arrows suddenly started firing a lot closer to Tommy's direction about a road away from his destination. Of course he'd been spotted by the attacker's x-ray vision before he even got into regular view. He used his latest web to swing himself up onto the roof of the student accommodation and fired one more off to catch an approaching arrow in midair, slowing its ascent until it exploded harmlessly metres away from anything else. 404 popped his head up from the damaged overpass and shot again, clearly pissed off that he was being thwarted now.

"Hello, Gogy," he yelled across the gap as he webbed the arrow again. "I missed you over on the other side of town. Really wished you were blowing things up with me and not back here, you know."

404 scowled. He didn't like Gogy, then.

"Why didn't you come out with your little team tonight?" Arrow aimed. "Scared of -" Fired. Web. Tick, tick, poof. "Don't interrupt me."

"Spiderman!" Dream called, gripping Sappap's arm as they cleared the gap between buildings to land feet behind him. "Really thought we lost you there!"

"Hello, Dream. Your friend -" he heard another arrow loosed and he webbed again "- your friend is being very rude to me tonight." Poof.

"Oh, don't rag on 404, that's his job. If you wanted to be friends you should've taken my original offer when I met you."

"I've already told you I don't want to play your games, if you're going to call it that." Ping. Web. Tick, tick, poof. Easy.

"Can I tell you a secret?"

"What is it."

"I actually got kind of pissed when I found out what you fight like, Spiderman. Because, you know, I'm not so much a fan of heights. Come down to the street with me for a sec."

"You're scared of heights?"

"I said, come down." Dream kept his hold on Sapnap and gestured to the street below them with his other arm.

"That's priceless, actually, that is. Are you really?"

"Pay attention, kid," threatened Sapnap through gritted teeth, "if you know what's good for you."

And he did, he thought. So he trained his eyes on the pair of villains and webbed himself an abseil down to ground level. As he climbed he watched them hover down as well, landing directly in one of 404's brand new potholes. Tommy elected to stick close to the wall.

"So what?"

"Oh, no, this was all I wanted," Dream admitted, clearly thankful to have his feet touching the floor from the way his holding arm untensed and fell immediately. "Common ground. Equal footing. Up there you're the amazing Spiderman, but down here you could be just like me."

"Except you have a massive fuckoff axe as well and I don't have any weapons, because, you know, I'm not one for violence by trade..."

"Forget about the axe, kid, I'm trying to monologue," the villain complained. Tommy narrowed his eyes and listened. 404 fired something off again behind him - his web definitely missed this time, because he got back a tick, tick, boom. "As I was saying, we could be the same, behind the masks. Maybe you're the Bruce Wayne of the real world or something; I doubt it. I think we're both just guys who got powers we didn't really understand, and we chose to take two very different paths with what we were given. You chose your stupid moral superiority crimefighting schtick, and I chose to have a little bit of fun with a couple of friends. Do you even have any powered friends? Do you have any friends at all? Or are you too cool for that, lone wolf?"

"Shut up." He wasn't here alone because he *didn't* care about other people. What a stupid inference.

(Fired. Web. Tick, tick, boom. *Damn it.*)

"See, there's a power all of its own, having teammates. You get a little bit of slack, first off - if I got taken out somehow I know these two are here to back me up until I recover. If we land a hit on you, we can basically count that as a win. Which we do, a lot."

"You never take me out."

"And how often do you take any of *us* out?"

"I did get you on Sunday, remember?"

"Oh, yeah? What were you planning to do *after* you kicked my shins in? Spiderweb me to the roof and run away?"

Tommy had no good response, because that was genuinely his end-goal in most of their confrontations. Tire them out, web them down, save the affected and go.

“You really suck at this, you know,” Dream continued. (Tick, tick, boom. How had he missed the arrow firing?) “Maybe you should have read up on your comics a little before you decided to go all in on the masked vigilante look.”

“You are so rude, actually, it’s not making me want to keep being violence-free - in fact, I would stab you if I had a knife right now.”

Dream shifted his shoulder, and the edge of a tarnish-black blade flashed in the streetlamp and moon light. “Go ahead with that one.”

Tommy swallowed. (Boom. His heartbeat in his ears had drowned out the whole shooting process this time. That was a bad sign.)

“Anyway,” Sapnap stepped forward, “point is, we’re awesome and better than you and you need to stop getting in our way.”

“No, man, I’m still talking,” muttered Dream with irritation.

“Oh. Sorry.” (Boom.)

“The *actual* point is that we’re teaching you a lesson about messing with the people who have more power in this world - and about getting cocky, I guess, because you really fell for everything I said tonight, didn’t you?”

Tommy stopped short. “Huh?”

“Oh, come on, Spiderman, I didn’t think you were that stupid. We ran you out of 404’s way while he set things up in town, we told you to come down from where you’re most powerful

and you *did*... Sapnap, I'm gonna let you take the last one, actually, because I want to savour the moment."

"Dream, I don't -" Tommy felt cold sweat from every pore under the suit. Had he been duped? What was -

"Oh, you know it!" Distantly, an arrow fired. Tick, tick, boom. "The last one is that you kept actually talking to us long enough for 404 to drop that huge chunk of building on you."

That -

Concrete slammed into his back.

"Thanks, Sap!" Dream crowed, "that was HYSTERICAL." He laughed an awful, wheezing laugh that wormed through Tommy's ears and infected his brain probably forever.

Crushed as he was, pinned to the floor and feeling his bones struggle against the urge to snap under the pressure of several tonnes of rock, he couldn't even lift his head to watch the trio regroup and fly away.

It took him a long, lonely time to recollect himself. When he could actually feel his restricted breaths beyond the pain, he blinked away unintended tears and made his first move to escape - but strength failed him and he barely nudged the explosively-textured concrete slab an inch to the side. He took as deep of a breath as he could manage under the weight and pushed down into his hands again, which shifted it a little further to the side but also sent terrible, terrible shooting pains down all of Tommy's side. Webs wouldn't help here. He needed to be strong. Another push - and this time he heard himself crying out, as if through a wall - the piece of building was definitely sliding, now, setting him free centimetre by centimetre, exertion by exertion of screaming muscles. When he had enough of a chance he rocked into the slab one last time and used the momentum to roll out the other side, watching in breathless agony as it reasserted itself exactly where he'd fallen. Fucking hell.

Standing up was... possible, it turned out. Walking was a bit more of an issue - he fell to his knees in the darkness, landing on the spiky tarmac corner of one of 404's new potholes. Ah, shit, yeah, definitely something broken. Probably a lot of things broken, actually. He knew he regenerated beyond the capacity of any normal human nowadays, but he'd never really had to test it with a serious injury like this; who knew how badly he'd actually been hurt at point of impact. Anyone else would have died.

Yep, support system was a terrible idea, because Everyone Else Would Have DIED Just Then.

A few moments of laboured breathing later, feeling the indescribable buzz of broken blood vessels and bones knitting back together as he sat there, he tried walking again. That was better. It only took a couple of steps to feel able to web himself back into the air, and then he could focus on swinging across buildings and forwards and turns and avoiding lit windows that might give away his position. And then there was home, rapidly clearing the horizon, his bedroom window waiting cracked for him as he knew it would be - he landed with relief on the wall, climbed through and practically collapsed on the carpet. Safe.

And in a fucking lot of pain. His rib was healing at a weird angle. Tommy took a deep breath and adjusted it with a short push from the heel of his palm. Thankfully, only a sharp hiss escaped him at the sensation - that wasn't going to wake anybody up. He was going to need a few bandages, though, at least until tomorrow morning, or his bed was going to become a bloody mess while he slept; he pulled out his stash from under the bed, cut a strip of gauze from a roll with stolen kitchen scissors, and started to pull the fabric of the suit away from his chest. Oh, dear, that was messy. He'd really been cut in a lot of places, and about half of them had healed directly into the fabric, meaning every pull opened a couple of new scabs and brought fresh blood slowly bubbling forth. He had absolutely fucked his chest, he realised with a quiet groan of pain.

Mask off, though, before he got any more sweaty and terrible. If that rock had hit his head who knew what kind of trauma he'd have, actually - he was lucky to get away with what he had. He cast the mask to the floor and got back to work on peeling back the blood-soaked shirt of his costume, each new tiny wound eliciting another urge to vocalise the sting, which he tried very hard to resist.

"Tommy, are you okay? Have you hurt yourself?"

Not hard enough, apparently.

Wait, *SHIT* -

"Tommy?!"

And then the clock ticked over to Thursday.

Chapter End Notes

wasn't that a fun cliffhanger! notes:

- yes the paninis really were That Bad but i didn't notice for at least a straight year hence the discrepancy of who likes them and doesn't
- it was actually really funny to imagine a universe where marvel just. wasn't a thing
- liquorice bad fight me tubbo
- it's fundy salmon, niki nihachu, and eret viar! i just never got an opportunity to mention their name in the text
- if you didn't notice tubbo is out here composing the actual spiderman theme on the spot im so proud of him baby boy
- literally ten real world pounds to anyone who can guess the twist just from what i published today i think it's technically possible just from what you have
- i took triple sciences and it wasn't that bad but i really felt that tommy would be a combined kid so he was
- HEY REMEMBER WHEN TOMMY TOLD TUBBO A BUILDING MIGHT FALL ON HIS HEAD EARLIER
- best besties best besties best besties
- yes tommy loves tubbo more than anything else on this planet yes he makes fun of him internally 24/7 we exist
- god dream is SUCH a creep here i dont know why he thought this was a good idea probably he just wants to be a fun sexy villain but. stay tf away from tommy you weirdo
- i actually love the idea of the support system being literally just to keep tubbo safe
- "you guys show too much mercy" is a REAL sapnap quote
- i always forget the tubbo window scene is part of wednesday so much happens in this one it's crazy
- tick tick boom is a musical i have heard of
- in love with "he wasn't here alone because he /didn't/ have friends" it's such a good tommy line

- did ya see that coming? i hope you didn't, unless you're ink, in which case you actually asked me to include it
- tommy's entire fucking body gets crushed and broken and he just be like "oh dear"
- yeah lucky it wasn't his head eh
- aaaaand finally i had that idea of "and then the clock ticked over to thursday" in my brain since probably before i started writing the text because the notes are structured in days appropriately so i must have had the it-hits-midnight cliffhanger planned for a while

hope you enjoyed, big day tomorrow!

thursday part 1

Chapter Summary

The thing about your loved ones is that they love you.

Chapter Notes

wait, dia, why are you uploading so early? what happened to the final chapter count?
what do you mEAN, PART ONE?

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

"Will, I can explain," he started frantically, stamping a foot over the mask on the floor as his mind combed desperately for excuses. Spider sense noticed the imminent danger zone he'd entered and slowed down his perception, as if that was going to help rather than make it ten times worse for Tommy to see in less than real time as Wilbur's expression flickered through a dozen different emotions. Shock first, obviously; it's not every day you see your brother home from work at his secret crime fighting job in a state like this. Concern, which was welcome, because he'd broken several bones. Maybe a moment of anger? That was less welcome, that was scary, that did not bode well for Tommy - and then in an instant it all melted into fear, and somehow that last one was *worse*.

"You..."

"It's not -" *what it looks like? Yes it is, dumbass* "- I'm fine, I swear."

"Tommy, you are *covered in blood and bruises*, and you're -"

"Healing! Quickly! So let me take this shit off before you have your breakdown and I will be completely alright," he hissed. Wilbur blinked at him across the darkness, and then took a step forward. "What are you doing?"

"Let me help," his brother insisted, reaching out a tentative hand to the edge of Tommy's suit.

"I don't need any -"

"Please, Tommy, it's killing me."

He met Wilbur's eyes. They flashed with pain of their own, sadness, more fear.

"Alright, if you have to."

Where Tommy had been ripping suit from skin in an attempt to get it off as fast as possible before it fused to his body from his overactive cells regenerating in the wrong direction, Wilbur's hands were much slower and more careful. That wasn't to say Tommy's entire torso didn't keep hurting like a bitch as his brother worked the fabric free, but it did feel a lot more like both his body and the suit would be salvageable after a wash. He watched with a strange sense of fascination as Wilbur frowned and winced at every new bruise and scar he worked past, never losing his steady pace but hanging his head a little lower each moment.

"What... happened?"

"Dream dropped a fucking building on me," he said, before he had a chance to stop himself. Oh well. Stick to your guns.

"Dream?"

"The green guy. Fast. Big black axe."

"Oh, that's his name." Wilbur didn't seem fazed to know that Tommy was on a first-name basis with a villain.

"Well, technically it was 404, but Dream was the one who laughed about it," he shuddered. Wilbur plucked at the last few bits of fabric attached to his skin, just above his hips. "You are getting dangerously close to parts of me you should absolutely not be touching."

"Don't make it weird, Tommy, I wasn't even thinking of that."

"Well, maybe you should have been, how do you think it made me feel?"

"How *did* it make you feel?" He seemed too calm, too reserved, for the mood of the situation.

"... Yeah, I didn't really care. But it's the principle of the thing!" Wilbur didn't fire back - instead, he gathered the shirt at its edges and moved to pull it over Tommy's head, at which he ducked and straightened his arms obediently. God, what was he, five years old? "You don't have to baby me like that. I can take off my own shirt."

"I don't think now is the time for you to be moving around a lot, Tom."

"I already moved all the way here -"

"And you clearly shouldn't have, because your chest is bruised to high hell and you're still covered in blood from having - from *Dream dropping a fucking building on you*, as you put it."

"I think I broke a few ribs."

"Wha-" Wilbur choked. "Jesus christ, did you set them?"

"I pushed the sticky outy one back in the right place."

"You're..." He dropped the shirt on the floor before the two of them and pinched the bridge of his nose.

"I'm going to be fine in the morning. I need to go to school, anyway."

"Tommy, are you fucking kidding me?"

"What?"

"You're not going to *school* after this. Take a sick day for once in your life."

"Wilbur, my friend, I don't 'take sick days' -"

"I know, and that's why your friend Jack doesn't have tonsils any more, and the holiday club had to put in that rule about drinking too much water."

Tommy was silenced.

"I'm going to talk to Dad in the morning and tell him... I don't know what, but I'm going to tell him something, and you are staying in this house tomorrow. I don't care what you're going to miss at school, I don't care if you had homework, I -" Wilbur ran out of breath and paused to collect himself. "I'll get my friends to come here for revision if it means I'm here to check on you. You're not leaving this house after that."

"No, Wilbur, you don't - you're missing information."

"So enlighten me," he ran a hand down his face, voice wild, "Spiderman!"

"Oh, yeah, no, I don't like it when you say it." It brought a terrifying weight to a conversation through which Tommy wanted nothing but to tread lightly.

"Why not?"

"Nobody calls me that unless they are very much about to kill me."

"... Right."

Tommy reassessed the injury situation. All his bones felt like they'd sorted out their differences, and his skin was closing up again the way he actually wanted it to this time. All that was left was a lot of angry-looking bruises and a general ache in pretty much all of his internal organs, but as long as he was breathing he'd be fine in the morning.

"Can I go take a shower?"

"If you don't mind waking Dad up."

"No, actually, you're right, he'd start asking questions and shit."

"You know I have questions too -"

"Wilbur -"

"- I have a *lot* of fucking questions for you."

"Not tonight."

"On the weekend then. I'll take a bit to work it out, write some of it down, I'll... I can't believe it's... no, actually I *can* believe it's you, of *course* it was always you, I should have been -"

"How is it of course me?"

"Nobody else in this city would get superpowers and immediately start throwing himself against the nearest criminals. We're London, not New York."

"How is being a good person an American thing?"

"I just mean that if I had superpowers I would almost definitely stay out of other people's shit for fear of screwing something up, but you went straight in on the hero bit."

"That's probably why you're not the one with the powers, then."

"Okay, don't hold back on me." He was smiling. That was nice. Job well done, there.

"I do really need to clean up, though. You can go back to bed."

Wilbur moved back to let him stand. "Are you going to be -"

"How many times do I have to say yes? I'm literally going to be fine. This isn't the first time I've come home hurt."

"I don't like that. You must know I really don't like that."

"And what are you going to do about it?"

The question hung in the air between them, the answer unwilling to be realised. *Nothing*. Wilbur couldn't stop Tommy, as much as he cared.

"I'm talking to Dad in the morning."

"You -" he stumbled over the right words "- Dream said, they have these rules, he said, if he wins, he... I have to be on duty, Will."

"You can't -"

"Will, please."

A beat.

"Take your shower."

And his brother was gone, back across the corridor to his room, door left ajar to avoid slamming it this late at night.

Tommy didn't shower, but he did run a black cloth (thank god for Techno's emo phase) over all the semi-dried blood and pulled away the parts that had started to flake. When the surface was clean it made the bruising even harder to look at, even more of a sign that Wilbur was probably right, he shouldn't go to school. But his streak - his record was on the line, he didn't want to lose a perfect five year attendance mark literally two days before he left the school, that was... Well, it didn't matter once you left, but... Again. Principle. Besides, he needed to see his friends again after the stress of the night - Fundy, Eret and Niki Nihachu were nice, but they were Wilbur's friends, not his. Plus they were weird. And musicians. And half of them were either Dutch or German.

He went back to bed, pulled on clean pyjamas, and tried not to put weight on any sore spots as he settled in for what would turn out to be a long night of shallow and dreamless sleep.

"Tom?" was the word from Phil's mouth that woke him. He looked over at the clock, noticing that his mouth tasted terrible. (He had never brushed his teeth. That was probably excusable, though.) 9:04 am - school had long since started.

"Hi, Dad." No signs of injury on show, everything hidden under the duvet. Good.

"Wilbur said you weren't doing too well, so I wanted to let you have a bit of a lie in before I came to check on you." The sun illuminated the bar of his still-half-open window on the wall across, an irresponsibly cheerful reminder of his inability to keep one single secret.

"Yeah, no, I... slept through my alarms, I guess." How had he managed that? Wait - he never plugged his phone back in. They'd never gone off in the first place. Not good.

"If you've got something - going on, Tom - you know you can talk to me."

No, I can't.

"Shouldn't you be at work?"

"I've left the call running on mute."

"Go back to the office, Dad, I'm alright."

"Tommy..." Phil looked somehow pained. "If you're sure. Text me if you want lunch. Wilbur's having his mates over for a bit."

"I told him not to do that," he muttered.

"What?"

"I..." Tommy sighed. "Nothing. Love you, Dad."

"Love you."

He was barely alone long enough to reach over to his bedside table and start charging his phone before Wilbur was in his doorway again, at which he lolled his head back in annoyance. "Do you not know how to leave a man in pain alone?"

"Are you still -"

"No, it's fine, I..." he rolled over to face away from the door and pulled out his collar to check down his shirt. "Looks a lot better. Definitely doesn't hurt as much."

"You could have got healing powers earlier, would've made pushing you down the stairs a lot more guilt-free."

"As if you cared anyway, you did it again the week after."

"And if you'd healed faster I could have done it sooner!"

He picked up on Wilbur's throwaway use of the wrong word - "it's not really healing, it's regeneration."

"Fine."

"Come on, we've played Minecraft, you should remember the difference."

"I'll die before I start keeping track of the intricacies of Minecraft potions," he laughed.

They bickered over nothing for a little while longer, Wilbur taking up residence on Tommy's spinny chair over by the desk, Tommy eventually sitting up and on the bed instead of hiding under the covers. A splodge of purple peeked out from the sleeve of his shirt - he'd put a hoodie on for later, or if Phil let him go back to school for the afternoon he'd have his blazer then. No problem.

Eventually, though, Will's phone went off and interrupted the banter. "Yeah? Oh, good. No, it's the one after Park Road, you've got to watch out for the - yeah, stay on it. I'll come meet you. I'll come meet you. I'll - fuck it, you'll see me." He hung up and turned to Tommy. "Sorry, I have to -"

"No, it's fine with me, I have to get dressed and shit."

"Oh, sorry, yeah! I'll come back up in a bit."

"You don't have to."

"I will."

He left in a hurry, loudly descending the stairs, and Tommy gave standing up a go. Besides a brief headrush, it worked perfectly fine. Spider regen was really overpowered sometimes - most days it only exhausted his cells enough to give him a good night's sleep and no more. Then again, he thought as he pulled on a t-shirt and joggers, most days the worst it had to handle was a few air-based cuts and slashes or the odd twisted ankle. That was probably why it only took about as long as getting dressed for exhaustion to start back up its cold crusade under his skin and tempt him back to the blankets.

He would be fine sitting.

Or lying down, maybe.

And he could close his eyes without actually sleeping.

Two hours later he was woken again by his ringtone (Able Sisters, City Folk, the best song on the planet) and an incoming call from *tubbo* 🐝🐝🐝🐝🐝 on behalf of his now-charged phone. He clicked through the popup to see the rest of his notifications - all of his mates had texted some form of *where are you?* or *are you alright?* Jack Manifold had gone for the route of texting simply *Tommy* on every social media platform the pair of them shared, from the obvious like Discord to the obscure like Skype which they'd never actually even exchanged a message on before. However, it seemed that Tubbo was either the first or only one to think of calling his actual phone number, which was the one thing that made noise on weekdays to avoid him getting into shit at school.

Oops, he'd missed the call - but he didn't need to worry because seconds later Tubbo was calling again.

Click.

"Hi -"

"Tommy, why won't you text me?"

"... I-"

"I've sent you like three messages this week and you never even send a thumbs up back or something. I know you're alright, you've kept talking to me in person, I just want to know why you won't actually text me. It's weird."

Well. How to navigate that one.

"Sorry for blanking you, Tubbo."

"And are you really sick? I asked Miss Scott about it in period one and she said you were down as authorised absence, you're never absent, something must be happening that you've not talked to us about."

"Yeah, I'm," he sighed, "actually having a sick day."

"Why?"

"Why does anyone have sick days, Tubbo? I'm not well."

"But you were fine yesterday -"

"Isn't it period three right now? Why aren't you in a lesson?"

Silence on the other end. He noticed a gentle background rumble that had escaped him before. "I'm travelling," Tubbo finally answered.

"Wha- travelling?"

"If you're allowed to be obtuse about your life then so am I."

"You mean obscure."

"Look, I've got to go now, alright? I'll talk to you in a minute."

"Where are you going?"

"Oh, you don't know what's going on with me? I wonder how that feels."

Click.

Tommy was left speechless, still holding a silent phone to his ear, for probably a bit longer than he should have. Tubbo was never never never like this. He had really fucked up by hiding his double life, apparently. Did this mean Tubbo didn't like him any more? No, that wasn't possible, it had always been him and Tubbo. A life without Tubbo in it was... Well, if not unthinkable, it was definitely a terrifying concept.

The screen lit up suddenly in the corner of his eye - that was a text coming in. From Wilbur.

We just got the bus from our road and I think I saw tubbo getting off it???? Does he have a dentist appointment or something?

His fingers jumped into action faster than his mind could process.

what

Like its still school time for you lot

i know that are u sure it was tubbo

Unless he has a clone

That lifted more of a weight from his chest than he'd thought the lack of knowing had actually left. And, as if knowing it was time to make up for the last few minutes, the doorbell rang right on cue.

He was halfway through trying to stand up again (all clear, for real this time, he reckoned) when he heard his dad reach the top of the staircase, and he'd only just made it that far before he saw Tubbo in the doorway, quietly negotiating with Phil. They would have been out of earshot if it weren't for his advanced hearing, but he still only managed to tune in on the latter half of the conversation.

"I can go home right after if you want."

"No, Tubbo, don't worry, we can do lunch for the two of you when you're ready."

"I'm not sure if I want to go back to school after either - I just kind of... left -"

"It's honestly up to you. We're happy to have you. I was here anyway for Wilbur's friends, but they've gone -"

"No, yeah, I passed them."

"- so as long as you want to be here... and, well, as long as Tommy's up for it."

"Thanks, Mr Soot-Watson."

"I will never understand why you still do that."

"I told Freddie and Eryn I'd do it until I was eighteen once," he admitted sheepishly - and then his eyes shifted to the side, and he spotted Tommy, and his face morphed into surprise.

He'd assumed a classic Spiderman squatting pose to spy on the conversation, he realised.

"Oh, is he -" Phil turned his head and spotted Tommy as well. He pushed back out of the squat and landed sitting down on the carpet of the landing; Tubbo seemed to be fighting the urge to push past Phil and go to Tommy, probably to deck him for being rude and not communicating, and he didn't want to be in the position where he could actually give away his powers by sticking to the stairs when that happened. "Tommy, come downstairs. Toby's come to visit you."

Tommy came downstairs.

"Hey, Tommy."

"Hello, Tubbo."

Silence stagnated between them. Phil vanished swiftly to the other room

"You don't look sick."

"Well, I am."

Another pause. "You should have texted one of us."

"I was asleep."

"All morning?"

"Basically."

“Maybe you are sick -”

“Why are you here?”

“Because I wanted to check up on you.”

“I mean, right now.”

“I’m skipping school.”

“For -” *for me?*

“I have my priorities.”

Tommy couldn’t help his face breaking into a smile as wide as it did. “Even though I’ve been an absolute arse lately?”

“It’s still you.”

“Tubbo, my friend, you are the best person.”

Tubbo’s eyes narrowed - he looked a little disconcerted. “Did you hurt yourself?”

“What? Why do you say that?”

“It looks like you had a black eye or something. But... like you had it last week, and it’s almost gone now.”

Wilbur never mentioned that. “I haven’t really looked in the mirror recently.”

“You should, that’s not the kind of bruise you just end up with. Have you hit anything recently?”

“I don’t know, Tubbo.” He forced down memories of an impact like a meteor strike and of the burn of breaking out from under it. The thick black hoodie he was wearing was pretty much the only thing standing between Tubbo and knowing how much damage Tommy had really been dealt - he could only hope Tubbo didn’t think to question why he was wearing it in the middle of summer.

“Okay,” he gave in, still sounding skeptical, and stepped in from the porch to close the door behind him. “Do you want to go back to your room?”

“Alright. I am a bit hungry. Did you eat at school?”

“I had a pizza at break.”

“Oh, yeah, that’s what I was gonna get today.”

“I know. And chips tomorrow, obviously. Got to complete the nostalgia circuit.”

“Fuck, I forgot I was missing that. That’s so annoying.”

“I mean, it was a team effort, we covered for you.”

“Are they still shit?”

“I think they might have actually gotten worse since year eight.”

“Somehow I don’t doubt you,” he laughed, and then they both did, and then all was well again for a little while. They decided to migrate to the living room, setting up on opposite sides of the sofa, turning on the TV to have something in the background, because Tommy had always been a bit like that and spider processing speeds made it even more of a small blessing. Tubbo still had his uniform on, obviously - he removed the tie and blazer, exposing skinny and untanned arms that reminded Tommy with every glance how innocent and unknowing his friend was, and encouraged a darker part of him to spit up images of Tubbo battered and bruised himself from running too quickly into a fight that he didn’t need to be anywhere close to for the sake of those stupid pictures.

“You know I saw Spiderman last night?”

“What? Really?” That one term he’d spent attending Wilbur’s old junior drama company better not fail him now.

“Yeah, he was on my roof!”

“What was he doing that far out across town?”

“Well I don’t know how you know where he usually goes if you don’t even like him, but he didn’t exactly say anything to me, so I’m not sure why he was there in the first place.”

“Did you get any pictures?”

“No, it wasn’t exactly a good view from the balcony.”

“Every view from your balcony is supposed to be great.”

Tubbo laughed. “I guess it was great just because he was about five feet away from me. I got to watch him swing away, you know, he left a bit of web on next door’s house that was still there in the morning. Looks a bit like a tiny, really shit surrender flag.”

“That’s... cool.”

“It was SO cool to actually be up close, I’m definitely going to try for that later. Oh, you know Freddie finished his text thing? Next time somebody spots the villains in town we all get notified.”

“Good, so you can stay indoors.”

“Oh no no, I’m heading straight for the action!”

“Tubbo...” *Please don’t do this to me.* “You know you’ll probably get hurt.”

“All in the name of journalism, my friend.”

“That’s not -” Words failed. “Alright.” *I’ll just web you to the wall until it’s over.*

The conversation moved swiftly on to what they were missing at school, and the stupid thing that Jack Manifold had said earlier (and Tommy had always liked that Tubbo joined him in calling Jack Manifold Jack Manifold instead of just Jack, it was another brick in the wall of their long-built-up friendship), and how weird it was that they literally only had four lessons left of their entire secondary school career before they just weren’t Going To School Together any more. Sometimes Tommy did, admittedly, feel a bit bad about choosing the better school for his life goals over sticking with his friends, but it wasn’t like any of them were actually moving away, and they could always game together like they did before exam season starting looming threateningly close. And he had made his choice *before* gaining the ability to shoot webs out of his wrists, which might have influenced the decision, he didn’t really know. They took a brief time out of talking to head down the hall to the kitchen and found Phil halfway

through a ham and cheese toastie, to which they made great synchronous protest that he hadn't done anything for them.

"I didn't know when you were coming down!" he protested, half smiling.

"That's no excuse for selfishness, Mr Soot-Watson."

"I'm sick and all! Wilbur already abandoned me for his mates, and now my own dad won't make me a toastie? For shame."

"Will was actually checking in on you about every half an hour, Tommy, I think he came to the conclusion that you were fine sleeping."

Tommy blinked. "Was he?"

"Yeah! Seemed to think you were in a lot worse shape than anything I saw."

"Alright then."

"Anyway," Tubbo interrupted, "lunch is a right!"

Phil made them toasties.

It was halfway through the meal, and after Phil had cleared his plate and gone back to work upstairs, that Tommy noticed the downcast look that had overtaken Tubbo's face. "What is it?"

"Oh, sorry. Just thinking."

“You can talk to me.”

“That’s what I -” he cast his slice of toastie down in frustration “- can I, Tommy?”

“I don’t know what you mean.”

“I was just... I...” Tubbo took a deep breath. “I really feel like you’re avoiding me. And obviously you’re not, because I’ve seen you almost every day for weeks, but you haven’t replied to any of my texts and I’ve been trying to be nice and ignore it and... pretend that I’m okay with it, but I’m not, and it’s weird, and I really just want to know if something's going on that you won't tell me about.”

He started talking before he had a chance to think it over. "Tubbo, I -" There were a million different paths to take, and he only wanted to turn around and go back to the road they'd been walking a minute ago. "I'm sorry, I really am."

"You keep saying that, and then nothing changes."

"I know, I know, I know, I... You know sometimes there are - things you can't tell anyone."

"I can't think of anything like that."

"Well I can, because I have one."

Tubbo hummed shortly. "Anyone?"

"Anyone," he repeated, and thought about Wilbur helping to patch up his wounds, and felt a pit forming in his stomach where he'd once been cut open by the tarmac.

"Ever?"

"Well, maybe not ever."

"So when?"

When I beat Dream for good. "I don't know when I can tell you. Ages. Maybe not before uni."

Tubbo looked sort of... turned on his head. "I... can't even really conceive what you're talking about."

"Good. Don't."

"Tommy..." He brushed back his hair and looked aside at nothing.

"I know it's not nice, and it's not fair either. I just can't -" *have any liabilities, let you get hurt, afford to lose you* "- tell anyone. You know I only want what's best for you. It's always been you and me."

"That's what's so bad about the fact that I can't be part of... whatever this is."

"I *am* sorry, Tubbo."

He picked his piece of toastie back up. "I'm sure you are."

They finished eating and washed up in silence.

It was right as they were halfway down the hallway, walking back into normality, that Tubbo's phone vibrated violently with the notification that would change everything for good.

"Oh, it's an alert from Freddie's Spiderman thing!"

"Huh?"

"Apparently the villains have been seen downtown. That means Spiderman is on his way, I bet - I'm so glad I brought my camera!"

"Already? They were only out yesterday!" Bastards.

"I know, it's crazy. They're gonna have to do some real construction work over the weekend."

A beat. Tommy looked at Tubbo. Tubbo looked at Tommy.

"You go," Tommy finally said.

"I don't want to -"

"I'll be fine here. I need to rest up, I'm sick, aren't I?"

"I don't know." He looked conflicted. Tommy gave him a pat on the back.

"Tubbo, you go out there and take the most epic pictures of Spiderman anyone will ever take. I want you to go down in history for today. And then you can show me when you get back, yeah? I'll be here."

"Alright." Tubbo darted into the living room, shoved his blazer in his backpack and slung a strap over one shoulder. "I wish we could both be there. You might understand why I like him so much."

"Have a good time, Tubbo."

"I'll tell you all about it when I get home. And you *have* to reply to my texts this time, okay?"

"Okay, Tubbo, okay, I'll text you back. Clingy."

Tubbo laughed. "You're right, actually, Tommy."

"Yeah. About what?"

"You *are* an absolute arse."

And then, with a smile and a wave, Tubbo was running down the street and into the action.

Tommy steeled himself to do the same.

Chapter End Notes

this chapter was a nice little lull in the action before Shit Goes Down in thursday part 2 for which i will be expecting you all to write your reactions in a separate note and copy paste them in the comments box when you're done reading

notes!

- WILBY MOST SUPPORTIVE BEST BROTHER IN THE HOUSE POG
- the "dangerously close" bit is a callout for my own feelings on tommy shippers, bro i hadn't even thought about it that way why did u have to raise the idea
- tommy is me crying because i was too sick to go to school Once and lost my several-year streak
- he's right tho, any other brit in tommy's position would stay out of the way, it's only the americans who took initiative with their powers (gogy is only here bc he's into dream but that's a story for another companion fic)
- i love wilbur and tommy so much so much so much
- dadza also pog
- please note tommy has regeneration not healing idk if i can make this clearer i wonder why that's relevant
- yes "i'll die before i start keeping track of minecraft potions" is a ghostbur reference
- i find the way tommy re-falls asleep extremely funny
- tubbo tired of being nice and fighting the urge to go apeshit
- dropping a single "toby" just to make you squirm >>>
- it's the mogul moves hoodie, i just love how Comfy tommy looks in it and i wanted to provide that vibe
- yes wilbur's junior drama company is the one i went to, yes tom holland's brother attended it at the same time as me one term, that was the term tommy went in this universe but instead of being spiderman's brother he simply Is Spiderman
- i later found out that it's actually /tubbo's/ thing to say "jack manifold" in the real world but oh well
- tubbo finally stands his fucking ground for once pog
- aaaand finally it was only a few paragraphs after writing this final sentence that i decided, yes, i definitely was gonna need a part two

so see you in eight hours from the publishing of this chapter for part two! notepads at the ready im serious shit goes Down repeatedly and i want to know exactly when you all go HOLY SHIT

thursday part 2

Chapter Summary

I'm here at the beginning of the end / Oh, the end of infinity with you / I'm done with having dreams / The thing that I believe, oh / That you drain all the fear from me

Chapter Notes

or, the best fucking chapter i've ever written in my LIFE notepads at the ready readers i want Reactions to all the best bits

you all made that playlist of last of the real ones, right? good start playing it this chapter was in its entirety a music video to that song in my mind that i composed during one ten minute walk to the co-op for lunch like two weeks ago

here we go.

(TW for head trauma and drowning!)

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

The back-of-the-wardrobe suit he'd worn yesterday was still caked with browning blood that he still wasn't quite sure how to get out (times like these he sort of wished he had a sister), so he opted instead for the bottom-of-the-school-bag one, hopping around to pull it up his legs as he locked the bedroom door and casting aside the hoodie while he opened the window, letting in heat to counter the cold that came with undressing. He had to make it before Tubbo's bus did, before any real damage could be done. Something felt important about this particular journey, and spider sense had taught him over the past few months that he should absolutely trust his instincts when it came to fights. Mask on, springboard off the windowsill, run till you can swing, then swing till you can see the enemy waiting ahead.

The Dream Team stood tall on top of the domed shopping centre at the heart of town, not visible to those who weren't looking, but pretty much everyone was looking. They were illuminated by the bright summer sunlight and by the glass ornamentation of the roof beneath them casting angled quadrilaterals across their aggressive stances. It looked like they'd prepared for exactly this moment - Sapnap, fists halfway clenched, the air shimmering around his fingers like he was twisting it to let off violent steam; 404, stoic and serious with bow in hand and mouth thin-lined in a frown; and Dream, looking if anything determined from what

the lower half of his face let Tommy see, just a hint of terrifying black protruding from the strap that circled his back. Tommy swallowed and debated his ability to face them as the crowd below them grew, strangers holding out shaky vertical phones and muttering commentary for their story viewers or whoever. Okay, one problem at a time.

“Are you all idiots?” he called as introduction from atop the bank across the road, and a hundred heads whipped around, breaking out into excited whispering. Spiderman. Tommy rolled his eyes in disdain. “Get out of here! You’re not going to get good footage, you’re probably going to get hurt, and you can watch it on the news later. What are you doing? Run!”

Most of them did as he said within seconds, and the few stupid or brave ones were quickly pulled away by loved ones. Tommy scanned the dissipating crowd for anyone he knew, but didn’t see familiar faces, which made sense since all his friends should currently be in school

-

Tubbo was here, crouched in the hollow of a furniture shop on the other side, camera in hand. He’d clearly entirely ignored Tommy’s orders in favour of snapping a few shots of Spiderman Being Authoritative or whatever. They met eyes (or as close as Tubbo could get with no eyes to meet behind the mask) and Tubbo waved shakily. Tommy just facepalmed and braced himself to jump to the roof closer to Dream.

“Hey, Spiderman!” called the villain cheerily.

“Dream Team,” he greeted, cordial but flat, to show that he really really hated them.

“Ready to get your ass kicked again?” Sapnap taunted.

“I had to take the day off school because of you.”

“Oh!” That had thrown Dream off, clearly. “So you’re, like, a KID kid.”

“I’m not a child, obviously, shut up.”

“Whatever you say, man. Makes it less bad to kill you if you’re not, I guess.”

“Or you could just not kill me at all.”

“Nah,” Sapnap smirked, “you know I’m never gonna give up on that one, Spiderman.”

“I thought this was Dream’s thing? Why are you always the one who wants me dead?”

“You’re just... SO annoying. I have no patience for people who annoy me.”

“I am not annoying. I am a pleasure to be around.”

“Dream, can we just get this over with?”

“Sure. Remember what I said a minute ago. You want the kill, get the kill.”

And, without another word, Sapnap was flying for him, Dream and 404 linking hands to share his speed in the back of the party. Tommy ran, again. He should have clocked this whole thing about touching people to have them take part in your power yesterday when Dream and Sapnap flew down to stand off against him, but he’d been a little distracted by the grievous bodily harm he had experienced. Now, as his body worked out pathing for him on a lower level, he was considering all the combat possibilities this opened up. Assuming it worked for him, at least.

Sapnap fired a few air projectiles into his back. Tommy dodged.

404 sent an arrow (the normal kind, it seemed) pinging at him from somewhere on his side. Tommy ducked.

Dream appeared ten feet in front of him on the roof of the Pret A Manger and suddenly the axe was flashing in his face. Tommy fought the urge to stop short, kept his momentum, and jumped, vaulting off the blade just as it slashed past dead centre of the line between them.

Oh, he was SO awesome.

He landed on the roof of a market stall that (he looked down) was empty now, the vendors probably wary of further damage after last night and having evacuated. This bit of town was too open for dodging a speedster and two ranged attackers - he needed to get back into the denser part of the shopping district, as bad as it was for property damage, and make it harder for Dream to swing his weapon. He launched a web to grapple him over the Ryman, the Boots, the Marks & Spencer's, until every other step had him clearing some small alleyway. This was good, this was cover. He could dip down at will, and only 404 would be able to see him through the brick, and since he didn't talk anyway it would take him long enough to communicate this for Tommy to escape. The plan was simple but perfect.

He spun to web an arrow in the air and watched it fall uselessly down the gap between buildings. 404, crouched across the way, caught his eye and flipped him off.

Dream sped to his teammate's side, said something Tommy didn't really care to tune into, and patted him on the back. The other man stood and offered his hand again - then in moments they were stood on the ledge opposing him, just beyond arm's reach.

But not beyond leg's reach. Tommy kicked out hard and doubled Dream over. 404's free hand shot out on reflex towards his partner as Tommy steadied his footing again, turning the sticky back on after he'd briefly disabled it to land the hit without pulling away more of Dream's hoodie - he had very much learned his lesson from that one. "Fuck," hissed the aforementioned hooded villain, clutching at his stomach, half sunk to his knees; Tommy nearly laughed.

"Yeah? Not so fun when you're the one getting hit, eh? I hope I fucking ruptured your appendix."

"Are you still mad about last night?" He sounded extremely pained. Good.

"Obviously! You almost killed me!"

"That's," he struggled to his feet, leaning on the arm of a frowning 404, "kind of the goal here."

"I thought the goal was chaos."

"Mostly, but you obstruct chaos, so you have to go too. Alright, I gotta take a breather, small win for you. We're back on in twenty, okay?"

What? "What? I'll take you on right now, I don't care."

"No, you won't." Dream looked at something over Tommy's shoulder and nodded upward.
"Sap?"

"With pleasure," said a cruel voice behind him, and packed air collided with his head.

Rip.

Smash.

Bang.

Smash again.

Fucking ow, his *head*.

(Looking back on the memory later, Tommy would see the brick wall of the shop come up to break his nose, feel the agony of his legs crumpling underneath his own weight as he crash landed, hear the sickening clang of his head landing on the corner of a bin at the bottom of the alleyway.)

Seriously, *ow*.

Concussed. He was. Probably. Right? Was this concussion? His head felt like a big fuzzy something had taken up the space where his brain should be.

He held up a few fingers and found a gash in the fabric of the mask, blood leaking through. Getting his hair messy. Ow.

Someone made a noise.

Him, he realised full seconds later. Sounded like it hurt. It did. Very much ow.

The fight. He needed to go back. Fuck up green boy. But his head was full of nothing, bursting at the seams with empty pain, blanking out his thoughts and severing the connection to his muscles. Plus his legs were stuck under... under... oh, under his body.

Move.

They didn't get the message.

He could have sat there, dazed like that, for seconds or hours (although later he knew it was about two and a half minutes) before a blurry figure crossed his vision, stopped dead, and got

a lot closer all at once. He couldn't make out the features, but he recognised the shirt from somewhere, he thought. Had something happened to the mask, or was that all his eyes' fault?

Air on his face. Mask pulled away. Still blurry. His eyes, then. Was he crying? When did that happen?

"Fucking hell, Tommy," said Wilbur, and he realised why he knew the shirt. "What happened?"

"I fell." His mouth was thick and metallic. Blood. Right.

"Is your - is your nose broken? It looks really bad, Tommy, really -" Will's head dropped out of his field of vision, revealing a couple more unidentifiable figures stood behind him.

Wait.

Tommy froze.

People?

"Whozat, Will," he managed to ask, distantly knowing that nobody was supposed to - to know - to see - especially not like this -

"What?" Wilbur turned, and froze as well. "O-oh - guys, I said go!"

"Is that your *brother*?" One of them took a step forward.

Tommy, brain battered as it was, gave a cover story a go. "No, I don't know nobody."

That was probably believable.

"I..."

Will sighed, placing a gentle hand on Tommy's shoulder to steady himself as he crouched (luckily one of the few spots that wouldn't have made Tommy start crying from pain again).

"Wilbur, tell us what's going on right now." A girl. He knew the girl. What's her face. Kissing Wilbur, except she didn't really.

"... So you know how I've been checking up on Tommy today?"

"Is that because of... this?"

"Well, it wasn't supposed to be, I told him to stay home."

"Jesus, Wilbur, he looks like he's going to *die* like that."

"He has regeneration powers, he gets through these things really fast, I think - I just - well, I noticed I couldn't see him any more and I came running before I had the chance to think about it."

"No, Will, Will, move - move aside," said the girl, and Wilbur did, after a pause. She came properly into view. Black hair white stripes. Nihachu, the name finally announced itself in his head. Niki Niki Nihachu. Tommy laughed and blood came out of his mouth.

Wilbur was quiet but Tommy was a better listener, for better or worse. "Niki, he... This... what if he - what if he does die?"

"He won't," she insisted quietly.

"I might. My head is very broken. It might go to sleep, and then I lose round two."

"No, Tommy, don't think like that!" she consoled, definitely not knowing what he meant. "You're gonna be fine, okay?"

His vision did seem to be clearing just a little. He could tell the others behind Will and Niki Nihachu were looking at each other with uncertainty. Something about a traitor, once. She looked back and they all exchanged the looks together. Secret messages. Tele- telep...athic communication. He didn't really want to laugh at that too, but it happened. He would have spit the blood away if every muscle in his face didn't hurt to move.

One of the figures in the back nodded, and held the other's arm until he nodded too. Niki Nihachu turned straight past Tommy and back to Wilbur.

"Will, this - this might be a good time to mention."

"Wha- mention what?"

And then her hand was on Tommy's forehead, and something cold and maybe green flashed through his brain, and the fog cleared.

He blinked. This was like regeneration on quadruple speed - the shooting pains in his nose died down, his legs stopped swelling, the gash in the back of his head contracted and knitted together in a way that made his hair tickle itself as it waved out of the way. When she finally pulled away it was with a grimace and a sharp exhale, rocking back and immediately moving to hold her temples instead. Wilbur caught her by the back, looking confused and shocked.

That was a shout, actually. What the fuck.

What the FUCK.

Niki Nihachu was -?

“Fuck, your head must have been splitting,” she said through gritted teeth.

“Niki, what -” Wilbur, for once, didn’t seem to have anything to say.

“We, uh,” interrupted Fundy from further down the alley, “we might have our own... you know.”

“Fundy?”

“You know.”

“I - do I? Fundy, are you serious?”

“Very serious.”

Wilbur didn’t move from his protective position around Niki Nihachu, but his face was definitely twisting into something sour. “I don’t understand. Is it - all of you?”

“What’s going on?” Tommy asked, now very much aware of everything in a way he hadn’t been before she - before Niki - what the FUCK.

“Uh-oh,” Fundy muttered, “Eret, I think you might have to -”

“On it,” they nodded again, and strode down the alleyway to the trio in the corner.

They crouched in front of the pair that were still huddled before Tommy first, and Wilbur’s sourness evolved to more bitter, anger clouding his eyes and furrowing his eyebrows. “Don’t fucking touch me, you traitor.”

“Don’t worry, it’ll only be a second.” And they were touching their index finger to Wilbur’s solar plexus, smiling serenely, and Wilbur’s head lolled.

“Oh my god, what did you do to him?” That was fucking terrifying.

“He’s fine, Tommy. Hold still.”

He very much did not hold still, scrambling to get up and see if he could get attached to the wall before Eret -

They intercepted him. Finger to chest.

And Tommy wasn’t scared any more.

It was fucking *weird*, he observed neutrally, having your emotions drawn out of you. It felt like someone had reached directly into his soul and plucked out a piece, one that was already beginning to regrow but impossibly slowly. It was probably going to be a few hours before he was back to normal. On the bright side, the thought of the Dream Team was suddenly a lot more palatable - he imagined the axe, as a test, and felt absolutely nothing.

“That’s not supposed to happen,” Tommy commented, readjusting his stance to be more neutral, because he just didn’t have the fear in him to keep tense muscles and raised arms.

“No, you’re right,” they agreed calmly, and stepped back again.

Niki Nihachu didn’t seem fazed at Wilbur’s sudden fall from responsiveness, simply wrapping an arm around him under his shoulders and using the other to lift his chin as they stood. She let out another quiet ‘ouch’ from the movement and leant his brother against the bricks.

“Is he okay?” asked Tommy. He still cared, even if his concern was very much muted at the moment.

“I just took a little bit too much, I think,” Eret explained, “he’ll be rebooting. We tested this.”

“So you guys all have powers too?”

“Yeah,” said Niki Nihachu unhelpfully.

“And... you can heal, Eret does whatever the fuck this is...”

“I can turn into a kitsune!”

“A what?”

“He’s a fire-breathing furry,” Eret smiled.

“It doesn’t make me a furry, I didn’t *ask* to be a fox. And I don’t breathe the fire. It comes out of my hands.”

“You did breathe it that one time when we were -”

“Not in front of the kid!”

“I’m not a child.” At least he still had his ability to get offended.

“Anyway, I thought mine might be something to do with limbic system manipulation, but, again, we did testing, and I think it’s purely soul-based.”

“So souls are... like, canon?”

“I guess so," they shrugged.

Wilbur jolted upright and clutched at Niki Nihachu. "They took something," he said robotically. He'd gone almost grey. Niki Nihachu looked like seeing this was very painful for her - that made sense. Tommy was sure it would be hurting him too if he hadn't just had THAT done to him.

"Yeah, Will, they were just trying to calm you down, they'll - can you give it back?"

"Just a tap. It flows in easier than it comes out." Eret gently bounced their finger off the skin above Wilbur's heart demonstratively, and colour returned to his face almost immediately. Still pale, though. Tommy wondered if Eret's extraction had left him paler too.

"Niki. What's happening." Just a touch more fear and confusion in it; distant, as if derealised.

"You're okay, Will, you just got a little bit... mixed up, and Eret's fixing that."

"All four of you have superpowers?"

"Yes."

"Wait, hang on a minute," Tommy cut in, "why didn't you three tell me?"

"We didn't know it was you," Niki Nihachu explained, as though this was the kind of answer he was looking for.

"I mean, me Spiderman. Why not come fight crimes with me?"

Fundy brought a hand to the back of his neck. "It took us a while to work it all out, and by then we, eh, kinda figured you had it covered."

"I very much do not have it covered," he noted, "on account of how often Dream absolutely thrashes me. Case in point today. Are you okay, Niki Nihachu?"

"Yes - taking on your head injury just left me with a huge headache. I'll be fine."

Wilbur scanned the people around him, face still flat. "You are very powerful. Especially you, Eret."

"You're lucky I'm not the villain."

"Okay," Fundy interrupted, "if you guys are done being creepy, I am getting increasingly worried that someone's going to walk past and see four teenagers standing around a guy in a Spiderman suit, so if at least some of us could get moving that'd be great."

"You're right, Fundy," agreed Eret, and they gestured to where Wilbur still held the mask in a tightly clenched fist. "He's gonna need that back, for one."

"Yeah."

Eret shifted aside so they could catch everybody's eyes. "Okay, team, I think I've got a plan for most of us -"

"Team?" Tommy repeated. They were a team?

"Sure."

"Do I have a support system now?"

"If that's what you want to call it."

"Wow." Eret had most definitely left his happiness untouched, because while he couldn't bring himself to worry for the others' safety, knowing he had people behind him for once felt really good.

"Anyway. Will's got to go home, obviously, so I think we should put Fundy on that duty."

"What? Why do I have to babysit your mistake?"

"One of those guys controls oxygen, Fundy, your powers are useless on them."

Fundy just huffed and looked away.

"Niki, I know healing Tommy will have taken a lot out of you, but I've got a bad feeling we're going to need you again before the day's out, so I'll stand by with you in a supervisory location and if Tommy goes down we'll be right there."

"Mhm."

"Tommy, obviously, you're Spiderman, you lead the offense. I've got another trick up my sleeve, if you don't mind me using my powers again."

"I think that would scare the shit out of me if you hadn't already done it once."

"That's fair. Will, give your brother his disguise."

Wilbur obliged. A spark of emotion had started to flicker in his otherwise relatively lifeless eyes. They were almost fully greyed out; that was probably creepy, but as was, it only mildly fascinated Tommy. He took the offered mask and held it out for a second, studying the damage done by the fall. Just blood and a few rips - nothing unfixable at all.

"And if everybody knows what they're doing, I reckon we've got enough time to -"

"Fundy Salmon?"

Oh, no.

Oh, no.

Oh, no no no no no.

Tommy knew that voice.

And his mask was still off.

This was just objectively bad.

"Hey, kid," Fundy was stammering, "the hell are you doing here? Don't you know there's a battle on? You should get out of here, you could, uh, you should go."

"There's been no action for aages! I'm looking for Spiderman. Did you see where he went?"

"No, I'm just, uh -"

"Why are you in an alleyway? Are you doing drugs?"

"What?" He leaned against the wall with his arm outstretched, desperately trying to obstruct any outside view. Tommy saw a familiar head bobbing and ducking to see past it.

"Let me... see..."

Tubbo's voice died as he locked eyes with Tommy.

"I told you to go," was all Fundy could get out.

"Tommy," he whispered.

"Tubbo."

Tommy had expected shock, confusion, maybe concern, the same way Wilbur had reacted to seeing him. Then again, Tubbo couldn't see the injuries he'd just been healed from - even his black eye was probably now gone altogether. Either way, what he didn't expect was anger.

"TOMMY, ARE YOU FUCKING *KIDDING ME?*" He pushed past Fundy, standing on the other side of the three older kids, practically shaking. "YOU TOLD ME YOU COULDN'T TELL *ANYONE.*"

"Well, I didn't exactly *tell* these three, they just followed Wilbur, and I didn't really *tell* Wilbur either, he just saw me -"

"I DON'T CARE."

Tommy bit his tongue.

"Don't you *trust* me? I can't *believe* you, Tommy, I really can't - I don't - Tommy!"

"I'm sorry, Tubbo." It seemed like the right thing to say.

"I know! You're always sorry, and then you go and do something else, and..."

Anger suddenly broke to tears.

Eret caught Tommy's eye and motioned to Tubbo. "Should I...?"

"No. Leave him." Given any say in the matter, he wouldn't wish Eret's powers on his worst enemy. *It really is lucky they're not the villain.*

"I don't know why I'm crying. You don't deserve it. Tommy, you could have trusted me!"

"Tubbo, think about yourself for one second," he broke in, "how many times this week have you told me you're going to run in on fights no matter the danger, just because you're sure that Spiderman will save you? If I told you, you'd have only done that twice as much, because you'd know I WOULD save you, because you're Tubbo. Of course I don't trust you not to trust me."

Tubbo wiped his face, his other hand going to the camera pouch hanging from his shoulder.
"I -"

"I nearly died again today. And I have regeneration. And -" maybe it would be best not to mention Niki Nihachu's healing "- just. If you were there it would have hurt you a lot worse. This is *dangerous*."

"You think I don't know that?"

"No, Tubbo, I don't think you actually grasp it. I didn't either, until Sapnap slashed my back open a month or two ago and I thought I was going to die. You would have never known about that, either, if you'd just stayed out of danger."

"Somebody what?"

"And last night, they dropped the building on me -"

"Tommy!"

"- if you'd even taken *half* the weight of that you would be *dead*, Tubbo."

Tubbo wiped more tears silently.

"I'm sorry for caring about you too much, is what it boils down to."

A moment.

And then -

"No, Tommy, I'm sorry."

"You're-"

"I'm sorry for not listening, for going out and being stupid. I just really wanted to do something good, impress Schlatt, maybe make a name for myself. You're right. This isn't the way to get famous at sixteen, and it's not a game. It's really, really... dangerous."

"I'm so glad you see it that -"

Tubbo surged past Wilbur, Niki, Eret, and grabbed Tommy in a hug.

He returned it, once he realised he should. (Eret's emotional fuckery was still slowing down his usual responses beyond the stolen fear, which seemed to have restored itself at a low level by now.) Tears wet his shoulder and he responded by gently running his hand up and down Tubbo's back in what he hoped was a reassuring gesture.

Eventually, they pulled apart, and both knew what they had to do.

"Go home, Tubbo."

"Okay."

A beat, and then Eret raised a tentative hand. "Actually - Tubbo, could *you* take Wilbur home for us?"

"Wilbur?" Tubbo looked over at Tommy's brother for the first time in the interaction, and seemed disturbed by the ghost of a teenager he saw. "What the hell happened to *him*?"

"My fault," they admitted.

"You know what, I am not even gonna ask. Wilbur, let's get you the hell out of here."

"Makes sense," Wilbur murmured, and took Tubbo by the arm.

Once the two civilians were gone, Eret ushered Fundy in and addressed their three superpowered companions. "New plan - we'll both stand watch with Niki. I figured as long as we could have you on standby we should, even if you're not needed by the end of it."

"Thanks, I feel so appreciated," Fundy monotoned.

"And I'm still alone with the Dream Team?"

"That's the way it has to be, I'm afraid."

A voice echoed from somewhere in the near distance. "Oh, Spiderman, are you ready for round two?"

"Perfect timing." Eret looked extremely confident in his upcoming success - Tommy wasn't so sure.

"So it's go time?"

"One more thing," they smiled, "I told you I'd like to try my powers one last time. This is the one I've worked the hardest on practising."

"What is it?"

"Well, it was designed to help people with coming out, but I reckon it'll do just fine for this as well."

The same slender finger poked the centre of his chest, just for a second, and Tommy could take on the world.

"You like it?"

"Holy shit, this feels incredible."

"Everyone could use a little more confidence in their life, is what I reckon," they said proudly, "so I really tried to bottle that sense of self-assurance so I can give it to as many people as possible."

"How long does it last?"

"You go back to normal in about an hour."

"Do you take it away, too? Can you just do that to Dream?"

"I do have to get close enough to touch, I'm afraid, and I think he would have my head before I managed it."

"He's not having my head." Tommy could face a hundred Dreams in this headspace.

"Good, that means it's working. Kick his ass for us, Spiderman."

"You can do it!" Niki Nihachu encouraged, looking mostly okay.

"We believe in you!" Fundy brought up the rear.

Tommy grinned down at the mask and pulled it on. Then he shot a web for the roof and shot out of the alley, into round 2.

He scanned for his enemies - they were back in the direction where he'd first found them, poised for action again. This time, though, Tommy had a new plan of action.

"Hey, Dream!" he called, clearing the rooftops with ease, liquid gold flowing through his veins. "Hey, bitch!"

"Hello, Spiderman," the masked man said evenly, knowing he'd pick it up at normal volume. "Did you sleep well?"

"I don't have time for your questions."

"Well, now that's just rude."

He came to a halt just feet away from the trio and made sure they were all looking before he clenched his fists and began to make his declaration.

"I'm DONE with playing your games, Dream. Go home. Get a fucking hobby. I don't want to do this any more."

Dream laughed. "You're not done until we say you're done, kid."

"I'm serious. Pick up knitting or something. Learn to speedrun. Write an autobiography. I don't care, just stop causing chaos for the fucking sake of it."

For a second, it looked like Dream was actually considering his options -

but, of course, it couldn't last.

"Nah," he smirked, "this is much more fun."

It was nice, for the first time ever, to not be struck with cold fear as the axe's black blade glinted in the sunlight and cut through the air at Tommy's heart, which he avoided by neatly stepping back. He knew what Dream wanted - the chase - and for once he was actually tempted to indulge his enemy. He had the power in him to outlast his hunter today.

"What are you waiting for," Dream frowned after a moment, "run, prey!"

"Okay. But only if my enemy insists."

"You think you're funny now?" growled Sapnap.

"I have always been funny." And he turned on his heel to lead the manhunt out of civilisation.

Everything went incredibly well, for the most part - Sapnap was still very overkill on the air-fire, but Tommy kept ahead of the oncoming anti-cloud of thin air his projectiles were leaving. Good. That would leave Dream and 404 winded, and easier to stop when he got them far away enough to properly fight. He flipped his head back every couple of seconds as fast as spider sense would allow him to process, monitoring the party's movements behind

him. Dream wasn't actively swinging for a kill, but he was holding the axe at the ready. Tommy wondered idly why he wasn't using his speed right now; he didn't do it as often as he probably should if he wanted to take Spiderman out.

Another jump, another surface, leaping over satellite dishes and chimneys on his way to the areas where fewer people might get in their way. There was the river, sparkling in the early afternoon sun, dots of blinding white burning a patternless splotch on to his retinas; he could head for the train bridge, since they were still out of service down this line from earlier in the week. He swung past the hotel on the edge of the populated area and dropped down on the side of the tracks, trampling fallen leaves and branches underfoot. Sapnap and Dream were close behind as he made his way up to the metal-and-brick structure that extended out of the water in arches, navigating up to the higher level. Never again would he fall for that stupid 'equal ground' trick - he was absolutely safer up here on the ledge. He paused to watch them catch up, still artificially confident, just for a second.

A second too long.

Something hit his foot and shocked him, hard. He looked up and around for the source - of course 404 had fallen behind to take the opportunity to shoot Tommy off the bridge, with an electric arrow, apparently. Spider sense slowed down the moment for him, thankfully, so he could focus on turning on the sticky and saving himself from the fall...

Why wasn't it working? Did it not work on metal? Was it the shock?

Either way, Tommy had a backup, as always; he could web his way back up, maybe with a cool swing under the arch of the bridge to come up from behind and rejoin the fight. He fired and landed the throw exactly as he knew he could, tucking in his body so only his feet would graze the water and -

Sapnap slashed the cord at the root, and Tommy sank like a stone.

He'd never been close to drowning before. As a child, Phil brought him up on paddling pools and the shallow end of the pool at the local leisure centre. If they went swimming on holiday, he didn't venture far from the shore of the beach, and Will or Techno would always come with him while the other stayed uphill with the snacks and towels in case he felt unsafe. He could do a semi-competent backstroke, an unsteady freestyle, and at least a doggy-paddle if

he wasn't prepared. However, none of that mattered when you were being weighed down by a layer of damage-absorbent super-suit on top of half of your normal clothes, you still had a heavy-duty thread of web designed to support your entire body weight dangling from your wrist, and the man above you was trying to kill you with the force of the entire sky at his command.

His first terrible, terrible instinct was to take a deep breath, which he cancelled as soon as it crossed his mind exactly what he would be breathing. His hands instinctively flailed for something to grab and pull him up - all they found was the web, which at least came away from its attachment point halfway down his wrist easily under concentrated pressure but which offered absolutely no salvation. What would his regeneration powers do about oxygen starvation?

He should be scared. Maybe he'd be trying harder to swim if he was.

Damn it, Eret.

Sapnap's face loomed above him, distorted by the ripples in the water. His scowl never lifted, it seemed - he was really out for blood. The edges of Tommy's vision started to dot with darkness; at least his eyes were undamaged under the mask, the eyes basically acting as swimming goggles. Perhaps he shouldn't have teased Gogy about his own glasses - he wasn't really one to talk. Maybe that was why he had shot Tommy when he did, or maybe he just wanted to steal Dream's kill. For a man that never spoke he had a lot of balls.

Tommy was just starting to feel a burn in his lungs and just ceasing to feel sensation in his toes and fingers when a hand burst through the water towards his chest and pulled him up into the open air. Thin air was better than no air - he gasped and choked and coughed his throat clear, definitely fucking up the inside of the mask as well as the inside, and with how dirty the Thames was anyway, he was going to need to wash this one as well. Sapnap had him by a scrap of fabric - one move and he was dropped again.

"You wanna know why you're not on the riverbed right now, kid?"

Tommy just stared.

“404 might think he’s the fuckin’ man because he never talks on the job and he can see through shit, but *I’m* the one who actually does the damage on this team, alright? Dream said we can duke it out for final blow rights. I’m not on for fighting. I’m gonna god damn kill you myself, with my bare fucking hands, Spiderman, you *irritating* motherfucker. Any last words?”

And maybe it was the confidence talking, or maybe he really was a genius, but Tommy had an idea, and something deep within him told him it was going to work.

So he grabbed Sapnap by the arm and pulled.

(Memory served - he saw Dream clutching at exactly this spot when they descended towards him last night.)

Sapnap’s frown evaporated into shock as he shot past Tommy, who didn’t lose his grip and turned instead in mid-air to face the man who had now become the target rather than the targeter.

(Dream and 404 holding hands, picking up speed together.)

He grinned and splayed his other hand, testing the air underneath it. It came even more easily than he’d hoped, a current weaving between his fingers and over his palms.

(Niki Nihachu’s hand on his forehead. Eret’s finger on his heart.)

The force of the entire sky at *his* command.

No time to gloat, though. That was Sapnap’s weakness - he couldn’t resist just one more little jab before he attacked. Dream usually reined him in on that, knowing when it was time to shut up and fight, but Dream couldn’t reach them out here over the river. Tommy thrust his active hand out to bring the current under them and stop them both from falling; hovering in

place was a lot less easy than having it move you, as he found. Still, nothing he couldn't handle with confidence like this.

"How the fuck are you -"

"Shut up, Sapnap."

Holy shit, he was awesome.

He dragged Sapnap with him across to the other bank, cutting a path through the air as easily as, well, air, wishing he could feel the rush of flying on his unmasked face or at least in a less waterlogged suit, but not taking it for granted all the same. The villain struggled under his grip, cursing and scratching and pulling, but Tommy could stick with the power of a spider on a ceiling, and he used it well. Eventually, once solid ground washed up below them, he threw his captive to the floor and dropped down neatly before him.

Sapnap scrambled to a sitting position, staring at his hands. Air shimmered around them as it always did. "What... what did you *do*?"

Tommy grinned, even though he knew the man couldn't see it. "That would be telling, Sapnap. Now would you kindly fuck off home and never come back?"

For once, Sapnap said nothing, and Tommy absolutely relished in watching him leave. One down, two to go.

The adrenaline was starting to wear off - he coughed up another bit of river water on his way back up the bank towards humanity. Eret's shot of confidence could only take him so far, he assumed. Speaking of Eret - there they were, running down the side of the road, Niki and Fundy in tow. "We came as soon as we could!"

"No problem," he called, and coughed again. The exposure of the suit to the open air was really freezing him, he noticed; he was on the brink of full shivers, as far as he could judge.

“What happened?”

“Oh, Gogy shot me into the water, but I escaped using my powers of deduction and being amazing.”

“I - I’m going to need some clarification here,” Niki Nihachu said, squinting.

“Well, my friends, it turns out that the whole touching-people-to-transfer-your-powers thing actually works on the bad guys too. And, let me tell you, Sapnap is one powerful motherfucker.”

“So you - you stole his air powers?”

“I didn’t steal them. I just forcibly borrowed them for a bit until he ran away.”

“That’s... Tommy, that’s unbelievable.”

“I bet you guys could do it too if you tried.”

Fundy was the first to take the bait, stepping up and touching Tommy on the centre of his chest. He frowned, probably trying to figure out if anything was different, then dropped his arm and stepped away again. “I didn’t feel anything, except that you’re soaking wet.”

“Yeah, it is... very cold in this thing.”

“Well hey, come on, try it on me, maybe you can warm yourself up!”

Tommy studied Fundy. “Where did you say you shoot fire from again?”

“My hands. Why?”

“Hold them out for a second.”

Fundy obliged. He almost immediately picked up on the shiny burn marks just below the three webs of skin where his fingers connected to his palm. There were only two burns, though. Right inbetween -

Tommy pressed his thumb to the spot, and a fire lit up under his skin.

“You always feel like this?”

“Since I got the powers, yeah.”

“You’d never need a jumper again.”

“It’s been hell since summer started,” Fundy confessed awkwardly.

“So it works?” wondered Niki Nihachu.

“You need to find the spot,” he explained, “Sapnap’s was the middle of his arm. I don’t know why.”

“Well, where’s your spot?”

“No idea.”

“We can test that later,” Eret interrupted, “are you good to get back into the action?”

“Hold on a second...” He concentrated hard on the fire. Just a little flare up, just enough to...
“Perfect.” Bone dry.

“How are you so *good* at that? It took me hours not to set myself on fire altogether.”

“I’m just so amazing and awesome.” What they didn’t understand about that Tommy would probably never know.

“Now, back to the task at -”

Ping.

An arrow landed right in the space between them.

Black tail feathers - oh, shit -

Tommy snapped his hand away from Fundy’s and just barely managed to get a web out before the explosive arrow took one of their feet out. Tick, tick, poof.

“404’s watching us. You guys need to get away so I can take him out, too.”

“Hey, if we sent the air guy packing, does that mean I can join the fight now?”

“Er - I... suppose?”

“Epic.”

Another arrow fired, this one on target to hit him in the back, but which only managed to graze Tommy’s shoulder thanks to spider sense giving him the heads-up. White tail feathers - bog-standard.

“Where actually is he? Can you see him?”

Niki Nihachu spoke up. “I think I can see movement in - he might be in the rafters of the bridge.”

“Up there?” Tommy whipped his head around to check and let out a bit too big of a laugh. “Oh my god, he’s like a little pigeon or something.”

“I love that,” said Eret, taking a couple of unwise steps closer to the hunter.

404 fell out of his hiding place.

Tommy couldn’t help but laugh again, hard and high-pitched, in all capitals, it felt like. He had landed flat on his back, sprawled unseemly on the road, bow landing a few inches beside him and his goggles knocked askew - it was pretty ridiculous. The laugh broke into another coughing fit, and Niki Nihachu smacked him gently across the shoulder in a gesture of 'shut up, that guy's probably a murderer', so he took a second to quiet down and watch the villain sitting up and gathering himself.

Eret stepped quietly even closer, and 404 regarded them with equal silence. Tommy couldn't tell how he was feeling through the disguise, but the body language was tense. Every move on Eret's part was tentative, testing the waters, as if they were seeing how close they could get.

Surely they weren't going to...?

They came to a stop right in front of 404 and crouched before him. His head moved to look at Tommy, just for a second, then back to Eret. He opened his mouth - and closed it. Silence.

Eret's hand shot out and hit 404 in the heart before he had a chance to move.

"You're going to get out of here right now and not come back," they commanded quietly. "And you're going to think of this whenever you think of Spiderman. See how you like it."

404's expression, even obscured as it was, was shifting into what Tommy could only identify as pure terror - it was practically radiating off of him even at this distance. Eret stood again. They towered over 404 (and the guy was short already, Tommy knew, but this was ridiculous).

"Well?"

A beat.

And Tommy could have *sworn* he heard 404 whisper, "Don't tell him."

British. That was a surprise.

Then he pulled himself up hurriedly, sped off behind a building, and became officially out of their hair. Two down.

This was the big one.

Niki Nihachu looked around furtively to make sure they were alone and put her hand to Tommy's head again - a shortness of breath he didn't know he'd still been carrying cleared up like lightning. She let out a few coughs of her own and pulled back closer to Fundy.

"You all seem to have very different attitudes about showing off your powers," Tommy noted.

"I mean, they're -"

Three voices overlapped.

"cool!"

"Useful."

"Valuable."

Tommy shrugged - they weren't wrong - and turned to face the bridge. Dream was long gone, god knew where, probably seeing how much chaos he could get in before he was stopped. And he would be stopped, Tommy was sure of that, it wasn't just the confidence talking. This was the beginning of the end for the Dream Team.

"We'll stick around in case you need help again," Niki Nihachu promised, and it sunk in again that *this* was his support system. Fundy, Niki, Eret. Wilbur and Tubbo at home. He finally had people behind him.

"Thanks, but I don't think I will. I think I can take it on."

"If you're sure. We'll still be here."

Tommy nodded and webbed his way back up to a higher vantage point on the railway bridge. He didn't see the green man anywhere, but that wasn't to say he wasn't out causing chaos, and he wasn't going to fucking stand for it any more. He ran down the inactive tracks until he could leverage himself up to the roof of the car park, and then across four lanes to the rear of

the same shopping centre where they'd stood before the start. This place was a lot more massive than he ever really realised from the inside - it would take you a good minute to run all the way across the top. If you were a normal human, that was. As he stood, Tommy crossed it in half the time, coming to rest on the same glass-panelled dome that framed the front entrance in a high arc. Dream had made a good decision to start out from here; standing here in the sunlight, shapes lighting patches of your body with magnified brightness, made you really feel like the main character of the story.

“Oh, Dream!” he called. Yeah, that felt good.

A figure popped into view over the way. Gloved black fingers on a thick white mask, green hood, brown boots. Strap encircling his back - they both knew the threat it carried.

Now or never.

“Where are 404 and Sapnap, Dream?”

Dream pulled at the edge of his hoodie silently.

“Oh, you don't know? I do. I scared them off. I don't think you're going to see them for a while. Which means - you know what it means?”

Nothing.

“It means it's just you and me this evening, Dream. One on one. Mano a mano.”

It almost looked like Dream was shaking - Tommy chose to believe he was terrified.

“You ready to dance?”

“Shut the fuck up, Spiderman.”

“Hey, there he is! There’s my arch nemesis!”

“I don’t know what the fuck you did to my team, but I got a - you know what, nevermind. I don’t have to explain myself to you. Get over here and accept your death.”

“I reckon that’s actually your job, Dream.”

“How did *I* end up the villain here?”

“Well, er, you see, there’s a little thing called morality, and I think it actually beats out how annoying people are for the scale of who’s the good guy. And you keep saying you’re gonna kill me, that probably counts for a lot.”

Dream just sighed, gritty and aggravated, and pulled out the axe.

He had been joking when he mentioned the whole dancing thing, but it really did feel like that sometimes: the acting and reacting, the attack and the evasion, the ducking and weaving around an instrument that glided through the air with intent to slash him open behind every flick. The question and answer of his movements under and over the all-important blade. Usually he was propelled by an encompassing sense of dread, the anticipation of his ever-imminent death at the hands of the villain’s axe, but tonight Eret had drained all the fear out from under him, and so he could simply appreciate the art of the battle up close. And it was an art, one that the two of them had become very well versed in since they met.

They travelled as they fought, Tommy getting as many sideswipes and webs to the feet as he could manage, Dream shaking off and stumbling through each one to get back to his mission. The chill of spider sense alerted him to every oncoming attack and his overpowered instincts helped him dodge past them all, no potential arrows or air attacks to distract his mind from the single goal of not getting chopped up. He might not have been scared, but he couldn’t win if he was dead.

And then an opportunity presented itself at the golden moment. He sent another web to slow Dream down on his way towards Tommy, and the unsuspecting villain tripped right over it, both feet caught, helpless to stop his descent, the axe in his hand arcing gracefully through the sky as he fell.

Tommy snatched the axe out of the air, and Dream landed unarmed. His foot was on Dream's back, pinning him, before his enemy had a chance to recover.

Damn, this thing was heavy.

"Seriously, just get a fucking hobby," he said, weighing the weapon up in his hands, leaning into his foot to maintain pressure and keep Dream down.

The man in green shifted his neck to look at Tommy, despite both of their faces being concealed. "Aren't you going to kill me?"

"What?"

"You have the axe. Don't you plan on using it?"

Tommy scoffed. "What the fuck, are you kidding? That would be so traumatising. You know I'm a minor. Just go home."

Dream considered this quietly for a moment. Then, his shoulders sank into the surface he was stuck to, and he said, "Fine, take the dub."

Tommy would have fist-pumped the air if he didn't need both hands to hold up this massive thing. He stepped off his (defeated!) opponent and watched him stand morosely.

"But I'll come back next week, you get me?"

“Oh, please don’t. I have exams. Can we do the fifteenth?”

Dream laughed sharply. “Seriously?”

“I’m the one with the axe.”

“Okay, we’ll talk on the fifteenth, Spiderman. Good luck on your finals.”

“Thank... you.”

And he turned, hand moving to his mask already, before vanishing into the wide open day.

Three down.

Tubbo was going to be so excited when he found out.

Chapter End Notes

BOOM LOOK AT THAT AND NOBODY FIGURED OUT THE NIKI FUNDY ERET
TWIST IN ADVANCE GOOD I BET U WERE ALL S H O O K

notes!!!

- lol period joke right at the start
- tubbo didn't recognise tommy's voice on the rooftop because<3 the plot holes are here for ventilation
- see dream didn't know tommy was child and he doesn't want to murder a child he has some redeeming qualities
- dre's POWER >>>>>>>>>>
- writing a concussion is fun when you've never had one! same with the drowning scene later on i have never done the it

- tommy don't know nobody i think this is the funniest line in the chapter
- "this might be a good time to mention" was another line i've had planned since the start it's literally in the notes same with "we kinda figured you had it covered"
- special edition lore is that i didn't wanna give niki healing at first and i had her switched with eret for like the first two chapters then i finally decided eret's coming out powers just fit better
- speaking of eret holy shit their power??? now you understand why i mention my love for them in the summary they're unbelievable. also hehe they literally drain all the fear from he
- oh yeah this is why regen vs healing is relevant! niki has instant health tommy just has constant regeneration
- fundy kitsune pog you know i had to do it to him
- imagine ghostbur when wilbur is greyed out and rebooting because you already know i did
- SUPPORT SYSTEM FINALLY POG YOU'VE BEEN WAITING LIKE 25K WORDS FOR THIS
- tiktok oh no song when tub arrives i had to im sorry
- the tubbo apology feels a bit forced to me but it was important that he finally say sorry for once in this fic now that he knew what he was doing
- eret eret eret eret eret eret sorry brainrot kicked in THEYYYYYYYYYYYYY
- i asked ink what else i should squeeze into the big fight and they said tommy can have little a drowning and i said ok that's my biggest fear of ways to die but sure
- oh tommy is so cool he is so cool and smart epic swag and poggers look at him GO fucking stealing sarnap's powers like a massive fucking boss
- it is REALLY fun to write tommy when he's all confidence no fear btw it's almost like streamer tommy at that point
- tommy's spot is halfway down his wrist where the webs go. why is dre's spot in his fingertips? why is sarnap's spot on his arm? where is gogy's spot? i do not know and i never will
- GOGY IN THE RAFTERS WHAT WILL HE DO fall out apparently
- what the fuck is going on between gogy and eret? i know. you won't unless i ever finish gogy companion fic. suffer.
- i hope you can tell by the way they act who thinks what abt their powers
- i was soooooo happy the moment dream dropped his axe i never have to write another fight again (except in gogy companion fic but shhh)
- are they? friends now??? well. eh
- aaaand finally yes tommy took the axe home with him before the news could catch him and force him to answer questions

tune in tomorrow if you're free, 12pm GMT as it usually is besides today, and boxing day for the double-finale, tomorrow's chapter is just Sorting Things Out with a special christmas present techno cameo, and saturday's is just to round out the week and make everything perfect! love you guys who've been supporting the release of this fic so far, and to anybody reading in the future i love you too but i'd love you more if you left comments lmaoooooo

friday

Chapter Summary

Tommy's last day of school.

Chapter Notes

MERRY CHRISTMAS to those who celebrate it !!!!!!!!

this chapter is dedicated to the people in my kudos with spiderman related usernames - that's peterman_spiderparker, sbiderwoman, yeeterparker22, and peterstarkjr - for being my Exact target audience

enjoy the last longun i hope you love it :)

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Tommy was on the news that morning. That was what woke him up, actually - the radio downstairs, magnified by his enhanced hearing, was giving a condensed summary of his activity over the past few months when he rolled over into the bright line of the morning sun barging through his hastily-drawn curtains. They talked about his extensive coverage on social media, and how he'd started to be recognised by larger companies and news organisations just in the past few days. Then, they mentioned that his actions called into question the limits of human ability, as it was unclear exactly how Spiderman did what he did, and the mysterious villains were even more openly supernatural, for the most part. They called upon any listener who might have been listening to bring forward any knowledge they had to do with what they believed might be the next stage of human evolution.

Halfway down the stairs, the radio turned off, and Tommy walked in on Phil eating a bowl of bran flakes in silence.

"Hey, dad!"

"Morning, mate. Excited for your last day?"

"Er... Wouldn't say excited. It's weird."

"Yeah, I don't doubt you there. I remember being pretty scared for the future when I did my O-Levels. But it all works out, you know?"

"I know. I do have two more years of school left."

"That you do." Phil took another bite of cereal. "How long until you're ready to head off, you reckon?"

"Half an hour, why?"

"Well, I don't know if you remember this from Will's last day a few years ago, but with them two we did this little thing where I took a picture of all of you on your first day of reception, and we matched it up to their last days in uniform, so if you're alright to -"

"That sounds really sweet. No problem, I'll let you know when I'm leaving."

"Thanks, mate. Are you eating?"

"I'll take a banana."

Getting ready for school one last time felt almost too normal after the chaos of yesterday - it felt almost like an epilogue, like the calm after the storm, or maybe like the eye of the hurricane if you considered exams to be just as bad as fighting supervillains. Which he might, actually. He wasn't likely to pass Combined Science at this rate. (Not that he needed it to get to his chosen college.) He stared into his reflection as he brushed his teeth. Ostensibly undamaged, but his eyes were a bit blown-out, like he had taken something. Or seen some serious shit.

When Tommy returned downstairs, fully dressed, bag packed, he was halted by the sight of Wilbur leaning in the doorway before him.

"Why are you awake?"

Wilbur looked a LOT healthier than he had after the whole Eret incident - the colour had returned to his face and he looked cheerful and comfortable instead of ashen and robotic. He'd ask about it later, though - they had to leave Wilbur behind for the drive to school pretty soon either way.

"It's your last day of school, you think I'm gonna miss it?"

"Will."

"Okay, I want to look at the baby picture and laugh at you."

"Why would I be embarrassed by a picture of myself in Reception?"

"I don't know, you were probably picking your nose or something. The point is that it's my job as your brother to poke fun."

"It's your -" Tommy put his head in his hands, hiding a smile. "I do hate you."

"Happy last day of school, Tommy!"

"So much."

Phil's voice startled him from down the hall. "Ready?"

"Oh! Yeah, sure."

He pulled up a file that he'd emailed himself as the trio walked down the front garden to the edge of the road. "Right, you were standing right about... there."

"Can I see?"

"Don't show Wilbur."

"Sure."

Wilbur broke into hysterics at the image, which Tommy still hadn't seen yet. "Is it actually bad?"

"No, you're just... you look the same."

"I don't fucking look the same as I did when I was four!"

"You kinda do," Phil admitted, turning the phone around to show Tommy.

And there he was - his tiny self, proudly lined up with the post at the end of their driveway. His chest was puffed, he clutched a tiny lunchbox in a tinier hand, he wore the grey shorts and blue shirt of primary school that he'd left behind five years ago. Tiny Tommy's hair was neat (not for long - regular Tommy knew the story about getting play-doh in it thirty seconds after arriving at school) and his eyes were bright and blue.

... Yeah, he looked the same. Just skinnier.

"It looks nothing like me!"

"Stop lying to yourself, mate, you're adorable. Now get on the right spot and we'll line you up for version two."

As it turned out, Phil had to angle the camera severely higher, as Tommy had about doubled in height since the day he started school. The image of two Tommys in a trenchcoat sneaking into a 15-rated movie was enough to set Wilbur off laughing again. Tommy smiled genuinely to see his brother go so absolutely mad in the middle of the street, and *that* was when he saw the flash go off.

"Perfect! Let me just... stick those two together, and... Love it. This is going up on Facebook."

Wilbur peeked over Phil's shoulder at the finished product, and Tommy was surprised to see his smile turn soft. "Awwww, Tommy!"

"What?"

"I remember when you were that little. You were such a piece of work."

"You were six, you can't have been much better!"

"I was a model child, excuse you."

"We literally had a discussion about the time you pushed me down the stairs like a *day* ago."

"Are you saying you didn't model your behaviour on that?"

Tommy just laughed. They'd always called him copycat as a child, but who wouldn't want to be just like his brothers if those brothers were Will and Techno?

He didn't need to copy now, though. He was obviously the coolest brother in light of recent developments.

They exchanged hugs and 'see you later's before Tommy ducked into the waiting car and began his final ride to school. Of course he'd be back in for exams in a few weeks, but he wanted to make his own way to those the same as Wilbur had, a declaration of independence. This was the last time he would run through these roads in his mind, bet on the traffic lights, see how still he could stay as they swung around the roundabout with the bored recklessness of a driver who'd been doing this for nine years. It was weird, a bit like grieving, a bit like the true ending of Undertale, with a happiness behind it but the ever-present sense that he couldn't go back and do it all again no matter how much he wanted it to. Drive past the recreation ground. Past the rows of antique houses. Past the barbers' and the petrol station and the bus stop. Park up by the estate. Nothing unusual, and yet it felt so different to know he wouldn't be doing it again on Monday.

"See you this afternoon, yeah?"

"Yeah. Love you!"

"Love you too, mate!"

He buzzed his way through form, not listening to a word, and through one last science lesson, during which Jack Manifold kept mouthing and signing at him excited statements he couldn't really interpret. The moment they were out of their seats and on their way to their table for a final break, he exploded into the gossip he'd been holding back all morning.

"- guess what happened last night, I didn't see all of it because I was in school until basically the last five minutes of the action, but it was SO awesome!"

"Is this about Spiderman?"

"Obviously!" he said again, as they left the Science corridor and fell into a crowd of similarly chattering students. Tommy could still tune out background noise just fine, but it was a little harder to ignore when every few seconds you heard yourself mentioned by a random kid. "I heard he managed to fight off the whole Dream Team single handed, and I *saw* him leaving with Dream's axe on his back!"

That had been a stroke of genius, to activate the sticky just enough to make it convenient for him to carry the weapon home. "We're sticking with those names, then?"

"Yeah. I like them, everyone likes them, they're catching on on social media. I don't even really remember how we came up with them."

"No idea." It had been a bit stupid of him to give Dream the publicity of a canon name, but too late to walk it back now.

Round the corner and up the stairs. Past the library. He was going to miss the library. "And I heard he actually talked to people in the middle of town! He told them to get out of the danger! Like, if you ever needed proof of who was the guy to root for, that's your man."

Out the side door, down the alley to the year eleven canteen. Up the step. Last time he'd have to remember to not trip over that step. "Right."

"I know you don't care about it as much as the rest of us, but -"

"TOMMY!"

He whipped his head around from Jack Manifold to see everyone at the table clearly excited for his return to school, and couldn't help but grin. They'd missed him!

"Where were you?"

"You're not gonna believe -"

"I told him you were sick -"

"Hold on a minute, let the man buy his chips," Jack Manifold held out his hands defensively as Tommy ducked into the queue. They'd planned his purchases perfectly over the past four weeks, factoring in allowances he'd been given over five years, so that with this final purchase of chips and a Radnor fizz he'd be exactly six pounds in debt to a school he was never going back to. He still heard them chatting while he stood in wait, fingers tapping a rhythmless beat on the side of the plastic bottle.

Eryn: "Did you really just *leave* to go over?"

"Yeah, nobody asked what I was doing or anything!"

Jack Manifold: "What did you even do?"

"I don't know. We just hung out. I left to watch the Spiderman fight. Thanks for the text thing, by the way, that's the only way we knew anything was happening."

Freddie: "It works? Fuck yes!"

"So I've not seen Tommy since about two yesterday. And most of my pictures came out kind of bad, in the end, but I was gonna take them over to Schlatt this afternoon anyway -"

Tommy pulled out his phone before he could really think about it, and scanned his purchase through with one hand's fingerprint as he texted with the other.

we can get better photos on the weekend if u want

Tubbo checked the message, shielding it from the conversation that happily continued over him with cupped hands, and had replied by the time Tommy landed in his seat.

sounds good :)

“So, we’re all here, all got our last supper, are we ready to say goodbye?” Eryn conducted the boys’ attention to the little ceremony they’d planned.

“Reckon so.”

“Them two took ages, my chips will be going cold by now.”

“It’s not our fault we had Biology!”

Tommy picked up a single chip, ready to clink it against the others’ ceremonially. “I don’t know why we’re doing this now instead of lunch time.”

Freddie did the same. “Half day, innit?”

What? “Is it?”

“Yeah,” Tubbo frowned, “we’ve known it was a half day today for ages.”

That brought a smile to Tommy’s face. “Oh, so not the weekend then. Today.”

“Even better,” said Tubbo conspiratorially. They shared the smile like they did the secret - with a complete lack of comprehension from anyone else at the table. “I’ve got something planned for tomorrow, anyway.”

“Do you?”

“Are we involved,” Jack Manifold butted in, “or is this some secret best friend only plot we’re not allowed to know about?”

“Little bit of both.”

Well, that would be interesting, Tommy was sure.

Eryn picked up his own chip to silence the crowd and they all leaned in dramatically, aware underneath the formalities that they all looked like twats but having fun anyway. “Well, gentlemen, the time has come to say goodbye to these terrible, terrible salt-free chips, and the rest of the delicacies that catering company provided us over the years. Most of us will soon be graduating to mediocre sandwiches and pasta pots that we would usually ignore - except Freddie, because you used to get that a lot - and who even knows what Tommy’s lunch is going to look like in four months, I know I didn’t go to the open day. May we leave this canteen forever in memory of the foods we loved, and thankful for the foods we’ll never have to touch again. In the name of the... yeah, fuck that, actually, let’s just do it.”

A silent tap of five pieces of deep fried potato, and smoothly down the hatch it went. Except that Tubbo and Jack Manifold both managed to simultaneously get their chips stuck in their throats and start coughing furiously. Tommy offered a hard pat to Jack Manifold’s back as the other two boys fussed over Tubbo - then he had to leave it there for just a second too long while he turned the sticky off. This was not the time to drop a bombshell like that by pulling away a patch of blazer.

“So, Tubbo, you said you saw the Spiderman fight while you were out?” Freddie moved the conversation swiftly onwards, ignoring a still-struggling Jack Manifold. “How did that go?”

“Oh, it was awesome! I missed most of it because after the actual fighting started most people lost track, and Spiderman told us all to go home and get out of the way, but -”

“He talked to you?”

“Oh, yeah! It was cool.”

“That’s unbelievable. He never talks from what I’ve seen. It’s always that Dream guy.”

Tubbo spun a similar-but-not-entirely-honest tale of his experience over the afternoon, mostly implying that he stayed far from the fight and didn’t really witness anything of importance, and that he left when he saw Wilbur and his friends doing the same. It was almost impressive how well Tubbo could lie about it - he’d clearly been honing his impostor skills on Among Us or some shit. Tommy listened in mock disinterest, which was relatively easy to fake as he’d been there, while the rest of the boys filled the two of them in on the little that they did know.

“And this is just a random one, but my mate who goes to school across the river said she saw them actually fighting on the train tracks!”

“Really?”

“Yeah! Well, makes sense, don’t it, not like the trains are running anyway.”

“My mum was so vexed about that, she’s got to get the bus to work every day now.”

“Ah, that *is* shit.”

“And I’m pretty sure someone said they reckon Dream’s gonna take a massive break after this one. It’d be fair enough, I reckon, if he’s had his axe stolen.”

“Oh, yeah, I saw that!” Jack Manifold forced out between chokes. “I was there, did I not tell you?”

“What?” Tubbo looked shocked. “When?”

“Right at the end. I saw him facing Dream down, kind of. Looked like he totally made the guy his bitch.”

“Is that right?”

“Oh, come on, Tubbo, you’re supposed to be head fanboy here, why am I carrying today?”

“I don’t know. Don’t think anything’s changed.”

“I feel like I’m getting more from *Tommy* than I am you, and you *know* that’s just not the natural order of things.”

“Alright, fine, it sounds really cool, I bet the guy’s not scared of anything, and I bet he owned all of them, and I bet it was the best thing I didn’t see yesterday.”

“Why’d you even leave?”

“Dangerous.” Tubbo returned to his chips.

“This is ridiculous! Tommy, what’s wrong with him? Did something happen yesterday when you were hanging out illegally?”

“No, not while he was at my house. I’m not really sure why he would have lost any love for Spiderman after all that - must have been epic.”

Jack Manifold blinked. “Who are you, and what have you done with Tommy Soot-Watson?”

“Jack Manifold, my friend,” he laughed, “you’ve been waiting for this moment for long enough, now we’re here, why are you denying it?”

“... Alright then. You think he’s cool now?”

“I guess I do.”

“Score one for the Spider-fans! And all it cost us was Tubbo.”

“We can deal with that loss,” joked Eryn.

“Hey!”

And when breaktime was over, and everyone had finished eating, they parted with the promise that they’d meet up for ‘revision’ purposes after the weekend. He wasn’t worried about the three of them staying mates with him, he decided, sitting out a final English lesson in which they just watched the movie version of Frankenstein to ‘refresh them before the Literature paper’; Freddie and Eryn and Jack Manifold were ride-or-dies at this point, a friendship forged in computer nerdery and being the only Minecraft kids at a time when Minecraft was the ultimate cringe interest. He was a little more worried about Tubbo, from the way he’d acted at the lunch table. Where had the love gone?

Filing out into the sunshine with two hundred other kids from his year all at once, and shooting Tubbo a quick text to tell him he’d be waiting by the front gate, he soon had his answers.

“We did it!” came his favourite familiar voice from behind a couple of girls who sailed straight past them on their way to freedom.

“We did it.”

“And you’ve started texting me again.”

“Oh! Yes, I have.”

“Was that why you didn’t -”

“Something like that. Let’s get off school grounds before we keep talking.”

So they did. Wouldn’t want anything to slip out unwanted around a dozen of his peers who didn’t exactly love him as a classmate anyway given his tendency for bits.

They walked for a little while towards the general direction of town. The middle of the day combined with it being the day after two fights in a row made sure the streets were almost empty, and when they stopped into a Sainsbury's Local about halfway down the big street for lunch-adjacent snacks they were the only customers save for a mother with a pram. One bag of blue Doritos for Tubbo and some Skittles (the white ones, for the surprise of it all) for Tommy later, they settled on a bench overlooking a semi-overgrown area of grass and trees along the roadside.

Tommy looked out into the nature and shit. Tubbo fidgeted out of view beside him.

"Tommy."

"Tubbo."

"Can we talk about... yeah?"

"Tubbo. I did not get this far alive by talking about things to people. I'm certainly not about to start now."

"But I wanted to -"

"In a bit, mate. We can listen to some music if you want something to hear."

"I'm alright."

"Okay. Do you mind? If we don't talk yet?"

"Fine. As long as I get to say my piece eventually. It doesn't have to be today."

"No problem."

More silence.

The sound of a bag of Doritos being opened very carefully. Tommy cracked a smile and closed his eyes.

Rustle rustle. Then crunch crunch.

"Why are you eating it like that?"

"Like what?" Tubbo frowned, mouth full of tortilla chip.

"You bit one triangle in two bites. The whole thing fits in one go and you know it."

"How can - you weren't looking - did you -?"

"Um... Yeah, that's one of the. You know. Benefits."

"Being able to tell how I've divided up my Dorito is a benefit?"

"No, idiot, advanced hearing. You know I can hear stuff literally miles away."

"Really? What's the furthest away thing you can hear?"

Tommy clenched his eyes shut tighter and scanned his surroundings as best as he knew how. "Er... not a lot's happening. People going home from school. Someone's - wait - is that Karl from Year 12? What's he yelling about?" He focused just a touch harder. "He's popping off, apparently."

"You're making that up," laughed Tubbo. He almost sounded scared.

"No. Him and Beanie Alex." The conversation moved a few feet closer. "They're gonna have a sleepover."

"Surely not, Tommy."

"Good for them, I guess." He tuned back out and looked back to Tubbo, who was staring, almost morbid in his curiosity.

"No way you can hear all the way to the sixth form from here. No way."

"I just did, my friend."

"No way!" The fascination was evolving into rising excitement.

"All part of the package." He felt a bit like puffing his chest the way he had as a tiny child in that photo, because Tubbo was impressed with him, and that hadn't happened in a good year or two.

"You're actually joking. That's so impossible. It's so... I don't know."

"Epically awesome and cool."

"Pretty much. What else can you do?"

Tommy looked around. "I can see shit as well, but there's trees in the way on most of our sides, so not much point in showing that off. Regen. Webs... I'm missing an obvious one. And I can be really sticky if I want to."

"Ew, what?"

"Oh! Watch!" He pulled his phone out of his pocket and activated sticky in the pads of his fingers before slowly lifting the device off his knee with no apparent force. After a second or two, it dislodged itself, and he was holding the case with a naked phone in his lap. "Fuck." The case quickly followed in dropping from his hold as he turned the sticky off.

"That's still pretty cool."

"Yeah! Yeah, it is, innit?"

"I also noticed that you never make typos when you text any more, like, a while ago. I had no idea why."

"That is such a random thing to notice -"

"And you're like a super acrobat now and stuff, right?"

"I mean, that's mostly spider sense."

"Spider what?"

"Oh, that's the big one I was forgetting! Yeah, my brain can tell when I'm gonna be stabbed and shit a lot of the time, lets me dodge it. You can see in slow motion if you're scared enough."

"Scared?"

"Not that I'm scared a lot," he lied. Ever since his taste of fearlessness from Eret he'd re-evaluated how fear coloured his interactions with both the Team and with life, and it was a lot more significant than he'd ever noticed. He did miss the high a little bit - it was like being the remnants of a dying star after supernova, a ghost of the greatness you'd been for a single moment before. Wasn't planning to chase it, though, that would be drugs or something. He'd get used to life post-knowing true confidence.

"I believe it. The way you were yelling at everyone on that roof yesterday, you just made all of *them* scared."

"But not you."

"No, I was there for -" his eyes flashed with sudden onset enthusiasm "- photos."

"Right, yeah."

"You promised!"

"I'm not gonna change my mind! Let me eat first."

"Alright."

He found himself having to force down unidentified Skittles two or three at a time. Something was sticking in his throat, and it wasn't something tangible. Tubbo kept splitting his Doritos despite the exchange they'd just had.

"You know I took the axe?"

"Dream's axe?"

"Yeah."

"What did you do with it?"

"It's under my bed."

"Cool."

Rustle rustle. Crunch crunch.

"And I did this thing with Sapnap where I - well, I fell in the river, and -"

"Sapnap?"

"The air guy."

"Right. Who's the archer?"

"404. I call him - never mind that, actually."

"Dream, 404, and Sapnap?"

"Yep."

Silence.

Rustle. Crunch crunch.

"And there was a bit where I... no, I can't tell you that one."

"There's another layer of secret?"

"Well, it's not my secret to -"

"Is this about Wilbur's friends? Are they magic too?"

Tommy flushed. "Why do you think that?"

"Obvious, if you think about it. Something was *definitely* going on with Wilbur, and he didn't say a word to me the whole way back to yours, but the way you lot were looking at him - and Eret said it was their fault - and something was wrong with you too - and I didn't - there had to be *something*."

"Yeah," Tommy admitted quietly. "Don't tell them I told you anything. Down low."

"Are you going to form a superhero team, like the Justice League?"

"Maybe."

"That would be so cool."

"Mmm."

Another crack at the Skittles. Somehow even harder to get down, chewed past flavour to a flat, dull paste. Rustle crunch.

"Tommy, is there something you actually want to tell me?"

He hesitated.

Then his eyes flicked down to meet Tubbo's, and the dam broke.

"Everything."

The words came out in a rush, half under his breath for fear of nonexistent passers-by, muddled in emotions he'd been repressing for weeks on end, full of stutters and stop-starts and breaks to catch his breath or swallow the still-persistent lump in his throat. He told Tubbo

about the day he'd realised everything was different now and the week he'd spent awkwardly trialling his way to control, the ninety six separate occasions he'd botched a throw or a jump or a step and hurt himself, no matter how minor. He told him about stopping petty crime for a good while, building a reputation, until one day he'd been intercepted by a man in a mask and a green hood, leaving only his chosen name and a promise of chaos to come, alongside the offer he'd turned down in a heartbeat but always wondered the what-ifs of ever since. He told him about the face-offs nobody had spectated at first, feeling each other out, and the terrible evening that Dream had first brought a friend, and this one could slice him up without a melee weapon. He told him about his first real injury at Sapnap's hand and rushing home without a real plan and craning his neck in the mirror only to see it had already closed up around a few bloody threads and the hour it took to free it gently back when he still cared about hurting himself. He told him about the months that followed, doing worse in school as he got better at fighting for his life, about the nights spent wondering if any of it was worth it or if, were he not there, the Dream Team would cause the same amount of or even less damage. He told him about how it pained him to hear his only friends have such faith in a stranger that sat two feet away from all of them every day, how it pressured him to push past wounds and get just one more win, one more night that promised peaceful sleep but most often ended up just as restless as all the others.

And he told Tubbo about the stab to his heart it had been every time his best friend insisted he'd be fine, that Spiderman, infallible Spiderman, wouldn't let him die, because although it was true he'd protect Tubbo with his life, that life was threatened far too often to be gambled with.

Tubbo listened in silence, inscrutable. He didn't even eat any of his crisps.

Always polite, Tubbo was.

When he ran out of things to say or maybe breath to say them, he felt his spine tense as though he'd fall over at any moment. He fiddled with the half-removed top flap of the Skittles bag, clutching its base in his other hand with a vice grip. His head felt like everything inside had just been sneezed out all over a blank canvas and there was no thought left to grasp, except maybe something stupid, like a comment on the leaves or one of the many songs that bounced around his head from time to time. The Skittles were his only lifeline. They should have gone back to rainbow with all the colourful images he'd just illustrated into being. Or maybe just red. Hah.

Tubbo's arm moved unexpectedly to hold him around the bottom of his ribs. He shifted up so they were closer and leaned his head into Tommy's shoulder.

"That sounds shit."

"And I broke one of my ribs, did you know that?"

"No, Tommy. When?"

"Erm, Wednesday night."

"Is that why you were wearing a black hoodie in thirty degree weather?"

"Pretty much."

"I've never known anyone so smart and yet so stupid."

"Hey, I like that hoodie! It's my Mogul Moves hoodie! I'm not retiring it just because it's summer."

"Okay, mister business."

"Says Big Law!"

And then they were laughing, and everything was nice again. No more secrets between the two of them. Everything out in the open. Easy to breathe like it hadn't been in months.

(And they did do a lovely little photoshoot in costume, when they got around to it at about quarter past one. Tommy pulled off all the poses, shot a couple of webs, even hung off the

roof at Tubbo's pleading request - although he reiterated that if Tommy fell and got another concussion it was NOT his fault.)

"These are amazing!" Tubbo beamed, clicking through his haul as they made their way back up towards the school, Tommy thoroughly back in uniform. "You're such a show-off, but it makes you a great model."

"Well, I know a thing or two about confidence."

"And I didn't even have to face certain death to get th-"

"Tubbo."

"Sorry."

"You know you scared me."

"Yeah, you told me, Tommy."

"Well, keep it in mind."

"I am!"

"Do it more."

Phil was a bit early today, Tommy realised with a double-take as he spotted his dad parking just out of sight from the school. It was - he checked his phone - about ten minutes before school would have ended on a normal day. Still, this wasn't a normal day, was it?

"Do you think your dad will give me a lift into town?"

"What? Why?"

"Schlatt."

Oh, right. Not like the photos were for fun. "Yeah, sorry. He should do."

As it turned out, he would - and happily. Tubbo gave profuse thanks and plenty of secret looks to Tommy every time he mentioned why exactly he was going where he needed to, and when they pulled up a ways outside the headquarters for the Daily Bugle to let him out within walking distance, Tubbo waved gratefully with the promise to "be back to annoy you again soon, Mr Soot-Watson!". Watching Tubbo run down towards the offices and out of Tommy's line of sight was a bit weird on today of all days, too, but in a nice way. He was going to make a name for himself, Tommy was sure of that.

Phil turned on him only once, and only briefly, the rest of the ride home.

"You two weren't skiving, were you?"

"Oh - yeah, about that - I actually had no idea it was a half day until -"

"Alright, mate, good enough for me."

"There was this thing where we both said 'four lessons' yesterday, basically, and I thought he meant four doubles when he actually -"

"Don't worry about it, Tom, I believe you."

"It is true!"

"That's what I'm saying."

"... Alright."

They didn't have or need time to brood for long, though, because Fridays were evenings for calling Techno.

Will configured the setup for everyone to fit in frame and Tommy grabbed plates and glasses as Phil finished preparing dinner and served up. Sure enough, the moment the clock ticked over to 7pm, there was the incoming call from Techno - he wasn't in frame on the camera preview, but Tommy saw a shaking POV of the ceiling, so he assumed his brother was travelling. They picked up.

"Helloo!"

"Hi!"

"Hey, Techno!"

"How do!"

"Hold on a second, I just realised I actually have to get the ramen *out* of the microwave before I can eat it," he said, still offscreen. The bang of a tiny door, rip, scatter scatter scatter, splash, then back to moving.

"So you're actually gonna ride out the whole year without failing the ramen bet?" Wilbur grinned, glancing at Tommy.

"Yes. You both are gonna owe me so many snacks."

"It's all coming out of my money, you know, these two don't have jobs yet."

"I just got that usher job!"

"It's unpaid, Will, love."

"Still counts!"

"Not for your stupid bet it doesn't."

"You're coming to pick me up Thursday, right?" tangented Techno.

"Yep. Thursday at fourish."

"Peerefecctt." He finally settled down, presumably in his dorm room, and flipped up the camera.

"Holy shit!"

"Tommy," Phil complained.

"He's all fuckin' pink!"

"I like it!" Wilbur praised.

"When did you do that?"

"Uh, Monday? It's kinda started coming out at the back, you shoulda seen it the first day, I looked like a Barbie dream car," Techno laughed.

"What have you dyed your hair *pink* for?" No secret that had always been Techno's favourite colour since as long as Tommy could remember, but this was ridiculous. He looked... Well, he did look pretty good.

"Do I get brownie points if I say breast cancer awareness?"

"Really?"

"No, I just wanted to."

"That was insensitive."

"Why, do you have breast cancer and you didn't tell me?"

"Well you dyed your hair pink and didn't tell us!"

"Not on the same magnitude."

Dinner progressed from there as it tended to, discussing what all the boys had been up to in terms of school and how Phil's week at work had gone. Techno was the only one with a real interesting story to tell on that front.

"Okay, so you know we have this online portal thing where they give us our assignments and the PDFs for reading and all that? Well they also run this cute little 'Fun Submissions'

exercise on the side, and every week you write, like, a poem or whatever for the class to vote on which they liked best."

"You must be great at that," said Wilbur.

"And I am! I get like six votes a pop, it's all cool, everybody loves Techno, you know how it goes. But then!"

"But then?"

"This bitch Clay - I don't even know him, I think he's in the other seminar group - this bitch Clay starts winning all the submission polls, like OVER three weeks after most of them even went up, and these votes aren't counted until Monday, so I'm gonna lose, and I have a suspicion we actually get extra credit for this which is kind of the only reason I even participated, and basically it's all terrible."

"Why is he getting more votes now? Didn't everybody vote on time?"

"No idea. Like I said, it's supposed to be a fun thing. Maybe he's bribing, or blackmailing, or threatening, or hacking, or leaning over people's shoulders to guess their passwords... I could use my advanced interrogation techniques to find out..."

"It's alright, though, I'm sure you don't need the extra credit."

"I don't. But I want it."

Understandable.

Phil excused himself to the loo at a later point in the meal, his plate clear, evidently intending to hint to the boys that they should wash it up along with the rest of the table, but Will and Tommy had gossip to share.

"Techno - and I shouldn't really be telling you this, but Techno - I have a really awesome thing to give you when you get home."

"Yeah?"

"Yes. It's extremely cool and you're going to say Thank You Tommy I Love It And Also I'm Going To Put It On My Wall."

"Is it a surprise?"

"Yes."

"Well then I guess I can't say for sure how I'll react, but thanks for getting me anything, Tommy."

Wilbur seemed a little caught up in thought. "You know your not-mate Clay? Clout stealer?"

"Yep?"

"You should try to make friends with him. Keep your enemies closer, you know."

"I can try. He never talks in lectures. Pretty sure he only has, like, 2 friends."

"As if you have more!"

"Hey, I do, I have at LEAST three."

Classic Techno.

Tommy texted Tubbo to check how the Schlatt thing had gone once they were done eating, calling, and clearing away -

it was grate! :) ill tell you proply about it tomorow

what time am i showing up

oh erm eleven ish

lit

did you talk to tehcn0?

yea hes doing alright

im gonna give him the axe as a welcome home gift

lol isnt that dangerous

techno likes dangerous things

oh true

*i want him to hang it on his wall and when he gets a girlfriend and she comes over she can
say wow you are so cool and bad ass with your epic axe*

grate plan honestly :)

thanks tubbo you always support my terrible ideas

its my job as best freind!!

hey you didnt tell me they werent terrible how rude

sorry tommy you only have good ideas 24 7 xD

now thats more like it

see you in the morning ive got to go

see you mate

Despite everything, still his best fucking friend in the entire world. He couldn't wait for tomorrow to come.

“Tommy,” Wilbur began, catching him halfway up the staircase on their way to get ready for bed, “if we’re going to be at home now, and if all of you are going to... well, I’ve got a little bit of a proposition for you. Just so I can be useful, too.”

“Oh yeah?”

“Well, you know - since it’s going to be the summer holidays - and you said Dream was going to let you have the exam period off, so it will be the holidays - that means we’ll all be

home at the same time, and if you've got more fights to fight - well, I thought I could cover for you."

"Cover for me?"

"Yeah! When you sneak out! I can make sure they don't notice if you're missing, I can be your guy in the chair, I can... well I didn't think about the finer points of the issue too much, but I can help you out from home even if I've not got powers of my own like you guys do."

"Thanks, Wilbur, I'd really appreciate that."

"You know," called Phil, voice echoing off the tiles of the bathroom, "he doesn't actually have to sneak out."

The brothers froze.

"Like, he's obviously Spiderman. He can just leave if he tells me."

And.

Well.

Tommy couldn't look his dad in the eyes for four days after that.

Chapter End Notes

he knew, eh?

notes:

- sequel bait pog? total 50 unique commenters on this chapter and i'll start it
- HE'S EATING AGAIN POGGERS
- tommy's eyes tell the tragedy of being spiderman lmao
- will's fine dw no lasting damage... or IS there... *coughs in sequel bait again*
- yes i stole this tradition from my family no it never worked this perfectly irl (tiny tommy pog lmao)
- boomer philza minecraft uses facebook instead of twitter to share his boomerisms bc he's not a streamer in this universe
- copycat tommy is so canon and you can't convince me otherwise
- i swear to god i didn't plan to have jack and tommy talk in the chapter published RIGHT after they got twin cancelled for n*zi jokes
- yes i wish i'd exactly planned my budget to leave that school six pounds in debt like tommy did this IS a wish fulfillment fic
- THEY'RE TEXTING AGAIN POG
- lmao tommy is now a bigger spiderfan than tubbo how the turntables
- i literally forgot to let tubbo say his piece so he doesn't get to im sorry that's another for the sequel
- you know your boy had to drop a reference to the karlity hangout
- tommy be struggling to communicate his emotions and for that we love him
- tubbo is smarter than ALL OF YOU for clocking the powers this is canon
- that fucking giant paragraph is about 400 words i hope you didn't get lost in it
- SWEETHEARTS I LOVE THEY
- and tubbo's gone to sell his schlatt pictures! what will he spend the money on???
- TECHNO YOU WERE ALL WAITING AND HE FINALLY CAME
- techno pink hair pog was actually a request from the group chat thanks sleepy
- "this bitch clay" lives in my mind rent free
- can you imagine if techno invited clay over to his uni dorm after the holidays and he just saw his axe that he fucking lost on techno's wall
- his three friends are bad skeppy and vurb
- "wow you are so cool and bad ass with your epic axe" is hopefully perfectly audible in tommy's voice in your mind
- also tubbo is such an xD kind of guy isn't he i love he
- wilbur supportive brother pog
- aaaand finally literally the SECOND note i EVER wrote for this fic (after "tommy big man no help") was "phil Definitely Knows" so i hope you noticed that he was being really cautious when he was wording himself alllllll fic bc he didn't wanna give himself away until he knew tommy had already told multiple people

i love you guys! see you tomorrow!

saturday

Chapter Summary

And it's nice, isn't it, when things end with a bow on the top?

Chapter Notes

you guys absolutely fucking smashed the sequel comment goal i was expecting it to take a full week not UNDER 24 HOURS so i guess i'll see you soon :)

and now, the epilogue!

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

11 o'clock had rolled around and Tommy was stood waiting at the bus station when a familiar green shirt and mop of brown hair popped up at the end of the road and ran towards him. He was wearing the camera bag again, for some reason - Tommy pushed off the plastic-glass wall of the shelter to greet him in a hug.

"Alright?"

"Yep! Bus journey was a bit slow - you know how I'd rather travel."

"Yeah," he laughed, and they fell in step towards the shops. People seemed to be slowly filling the roads back up, perhaps sensing that the danger had passed for the time being and wanting to get a bit of Saturday shopping in before things went back to shit in who knew how long. (He did. He knew how long. Long enough for him to get some GCSEs, thankfully.) Although it was crowded, it was peaceful - more welcoming than the stifling silence that emptiness brought the streets each time he'd been here alone in the past few weeks. He felt lighter. And Tubbo was here too - that was nice.

"So you told me you were going to explain what happened with Schlatt yesterday?"

“Oh! Yeah! Basically, a ton of people have been coming to the Bugle, like, ALL week with terrible phone camera videos and that, they’ve been getting really impatient wanting to publish a story with a picture so they can actually put you on the front page.”

“That would be so awesome. I’d put that on my pinboard.”

“Yeah, well when I showed up with high quality photos at the back of the queue Schlatt was about to just kick me out, but he took a look and he absolutely loved them, Tommy, he said they were perfect!” Tubbo was beaming with excitement, hand on his camera bag, as though protecting a treasure. They stopped at the crossing.

“Amazing, Tubbo, that’s really amazing.”

“So he bought the rights off me, and you’re going to be in the newspaper by Monday!”

“I’m so... wait, he bought them?”

“Yeah.”

“I thought you were just supposed to hand them over.”

“You really haven’t been listening all week, have you? We had that chat about making a Spiderman movie with my Schlatt money literally a couple of days ago.”

“Oh.” He still felt really bad about how he’d been treating his friends lately, not that most of them seemed to have noticed. Not that it was particularly wrong of him to prioritise fighting crime over his schoolmates, but he still felt guilty. Green man - cross the road.

“Anyway, I decided that since I’ve been having a tough enough time of it with GCSEs and... well, you know... I was going to use the money for something relaxing and refreshing instead of adding another thing-to-do to my pile. And then I found out that Schlatt was going to buy *seven* of my photos, and - do you remember how much I said they were going for?”

“Um...” Really guilty. They turned past the Wetherspoons on to the main-er road, from where you could see the the shit second bus station, and walked past Pizza Hut and Uniqlo and the phone repair shop that was secretly also a drug-adjacent-things shop before stopping halfway down the street.

“Fifty quid, Tommy. I have three hundred and fifty pounds to spend on something nice. Guess what I got us.”

“What?”

“Ice cream!”

Tommy suddenly clocked that they were standing outside the local ice-cream parlour - he’d always considered it overpriced and overrated, only really having visited once or twice when friends insisted, but he supposed that if Tubbo had the money and he wanted to spend it on this place then that was fair enough. “I hope we can get a booth.”

“No, don’t worry, I sent everyone on ahead to grab one!”

“You what?”

They stepped inside, past the counter, and Tommy spotted Jack Manifold chatting away in the back right corner, at one of the largest booths. “Oh, good, they actually grabbed it.”

“How many people have you invited?”

“Er...” He started counting on his fingers. “Us five, and then I also asked Wilbur to bring his friends, because I assume if they were with you on Thursday they must have some part in me actually having this money right now, and I felt a bit bad about not inviting them if they did.”

“Nine people?”

“Well I’m balling, now, aren’t I?”

“True, that is a lot of money.”

They each slid into a seat on either side of the booth, Tommy finding himself squished up against Fundy, Tubbo settling in next to Eryn and pulling out his camera almost immediately to show off the moneymakers. Everyone seemed to be conversing with everyone else, nobody ignored or left out, everyone... well, supported. Freddie asked him about his day yesterday and he made a stupid joke about his awesomeness. Niki Nihachu reached over a space from her spot beside Wilbur to ruffle Tommy’s hair. Jack Manifold and Eret jinxed each other with a positive comment on the pictures, and laughed as Tommy and Tubbo exchanged conspiratorial snickers. And nobody even said a word about the Dream Team.

The ice cream was delicious, and it tasted even better knowing how it got there.

Yep, he sighed contentedly. Life was good now. Bring on the exams and all that.

Tommy was really glad he’d fallen into his support system.

Chapter End Notes

(yeah i know it was short it's the one important thing that happened to tommy all day after this he went home and literally slept for eighteen straight hours bc of the fight fatigue finally kicking in)

thank you all so much for coming along on this ride with me! it was lovely to meet you all with your wonderful comments and notes and support and ideas and inspiration and

love i'm really glad we could share this week together :)

[the RLAF chaos discord, for dsmp writers and readers](#)

tell em ilex sent you

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